

Supporting People Re-Inspection

London Borough of Havering

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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 Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) 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.

Summary

- 1 The London Borough of Havering is to the east of central London. To the north and east the borough is bordered by the Essex countryside, to the south by a three mile River Thames frontage, and to the west by the neighbouring boroughs of Redbridge and Barking and Dagenham. The population of Havering is 225,000¹, living in approximately 96,000 households and 6.6 per cent of the population are from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities.²
- 2 Generally Havering is an affluent area, ranked 211th out of the 345 English local authorities³, where the first ranked is the most deprived. Nevertheless, there are pockets of deprivation in Harold Hill, Collier Row, West and South Hornchurch.
- 3 The Council has a Conservative majority and is governed by a leader and cabinet structure. The Council employs 5,490 staff (excluding schools).
- 4 Havering is the administering authority for Supporting People working in partnership with the Havering Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the London Probation Service. The Council received a Supporting People grant of £2.4 million and an administration grant of £130,608 for 2006/07. The London Borough of Havering is one of the 20 administering local authorities (ALA) to receive the lowest grant allocation for Supporting People.

¹ Mid-year 2004 population estimates

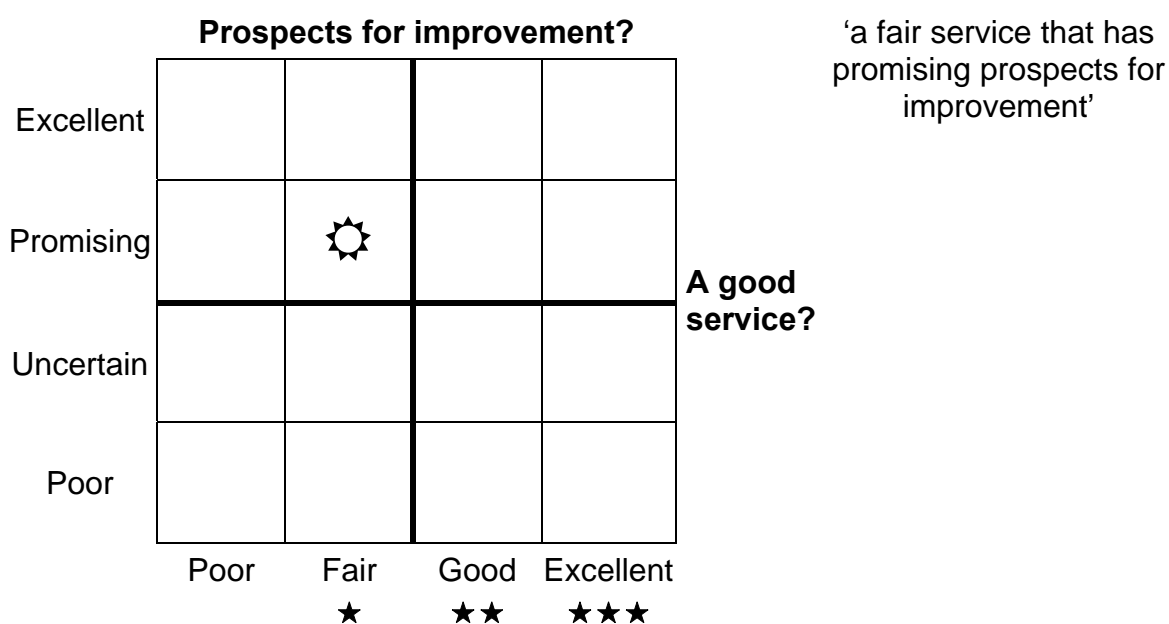
² Mid-year 2003 Office for National Statistics

³ DCLG Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2004

Scoring the service

- 5 We have assessed London Borough of Havering as providing a 'fair', one-star service that has promising prospects for improvement. Our judgements are based on the evidence obtained during the inspection and are outlined below.

Figure 1 Scoring chart⁴



Source: Audit Commission

- 6 During our inspection we identified the following strengths in the way in which the Supporting People programme has been administered.
- Improved alignment of the provision of Supporting People through its position in the sustainable communities' directorate and improved joint working with adult services.
 - Information regarding Supporting People is readily available and a key feature of the Council. This includes the Supporting People leaflets and newsletter, an accessible and useful Supporting People webpage and regular articles in the Council's newsletter.

⁴ The scoring chart displays performance in two dimensions. The horizontal axis shows how good the service or function is now, on a scale ranging from no stars for a service that is poor (at the left-hand end) to three stars for an excellent service (right-hand end). The vertical axis shows the improvement prospects of the service, also on a four-point scale.

- A robust process has been applied in the completion of service reviews that have led to overall programme savings of £684,928, clearer provision of housing-related support (through the application of clear eligibility criteria) that has led to an improved focus on support plans and enabling independent living (particularly for people with learning disabilities and mental health issues).
 - Joint working with partners to introduce new services for older people, expand floating support services for young people.
 - Regular monitoring of the programme and related functions by the commissioning body (CB), that include the work plan, service reviews, QAF⁵, financial, risk and some provider performance.
 - The Supporting People team have a range of skills and capacity, are highly motivated and well managed.
 - A positive relationship with providers that are supportive of the service review process and outcome, that includes a level playing field between internal and external providers.
 - Service user involvement in service reviews, the design of review-related information and Supporting People general information with service user involvement and a strategy in place to develop this area.
 - Sufficient information and sign-posting provided to potential service users accessing the service by telephone.
 - Strategic planning of service need analysis that has included commissioning a BME housing need survey and a strategic review of older people's housing support services.
 - A wider corporate commitment to understanding the needs of the BME community through stakeholder conferences, and network building with community groups.
- 7 However, there are a number of areas of weakness that require improvement.
- A lack of sustained engagement of the PCT in the programme.
 - The core strategy group (CSG) is not yet sufficiently developed to have a consistent strategic input into the programme. The recently increased representation of the group has yet to be developed, this includes the four service users that attend as representatives.
 - There has been no development of local or shared performance indicators with partners, or outcome measurements for service users.
 - The needs mapping is not fully established in all areas. This has prevented spend priorities for the service review savings from being comprehensively identified, new services being commissioned and the Council from being confident that it is meeting the needs of the most vulnerable groups.

⁵ QAF - Quality Assessment Framework

8 Supporting People Re-Inspection | Scoring the service

- Beyond the service review process an approach to value for money has not been developed. Benchmarking of costs and services has been limited, and there has been no benchmarking of the administrative grant.
 - Limited stakeholder and service user involvement in the five-year strategy (although there are plans to review the strategy in 2006/07).
 - The level of information regarding Supporting People at frontline face-to-face level was weak, that forms a barrier on potential service users accessing information through this means.
 - The Council has been late in developing contract negotiations beyond interim contracts (determined by the service reviews), and not all providers were clear of the future of contract negotiations.
 - Fairer charging has only recently been introduced, and there has been a low take-up level from those identified that would potentially benefit from the service.
- 8 We have judged that the service has 'promising' prospects for improvement for the following reasons.
- The restructuring has improved joined up working, communication and management of the Supporting People programme.
 - Partnership and cross-authority working is in place.
 - The Supporting People team has the capacity and skills to deliver and develop the programme, with sufficient IT support systems.
 - Additional financial capacity has been awarded through the administrative grant from the Council.
 - There is a track record of corporate improvement in the areas of managerial capacity, performance management, sickness absence and value for money.
 - There is a performance management framework in place that reports to the CB and to the Council. It includes performance development appraisals and recognition of training needs.
 - Performance against delivering the Audit Commission's 29 recommendations and the five-year strategy annual plan for 2005/06 is positive and reasonable.
 - All service reviews have been completed, significant savings achieved and support services improved for service users.
 - Some new services and extended services have been introduced in the last year for older and young people, and homeless families.
 - There is clear leadership in place. Through the recent political stability of Havering, member and officer commitment to the programme, and the profile of Supporting People being raised.
 - There are clear⁶ plans in place to address the weaknesses found during the inspection.

⁶ Other than a lack of consistent SMART targets.

- 9 However, there are a number of areas of weakness that need improvement.
- Local or shared performance indicators have not been developed, neither has outcome measurements for service users.
 - Benchmarking and learning is not sufficiently developed to compare with and learn from the higher performing ALAs.
 - New service provision has not been completely identified for the savings achieved through the 2005/06 service reviews, due to the lack of comprehensive needs analysis data.
 - Plans are not comprehensively SMART,⁷ as many lack clear measurable outcomes against the targets set.

⁷ SMART - specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and target-driven.

Recommendations

- 10 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 costs⁸ 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 customers, service providers and councillors, and addresses all weaknesses identified in the report. The inspection team makes the following recommendations.

<i>Recommendation</i>
<p><i>R1 Improve governance arrangements by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• establishing action plans for the commissioning body and core strategy group which are formally monitored and reported on.</i>

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- partners will be able to measure performance of the governance arrangements, determine its effectiveness and review as appropriate;
- clear objectives will be in place for each body to deliver the programme, that include reporting mechanisms between the two bodies; and
- the commissioning body and core strategy group will have a clear role in tackling issues about performance and missed targets across the partnership.

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

⁸ 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 Strengthen delivery arrangements by:

- *establishing local and shared (with partners) performance indicators;*
- *working with the sub-regional group on the development of outcome measurements for service users;*
- *establishing an approach to needs analysis across the client groups in a systematic and regular (at least six-monthly) manner;*
- *developing an approach to value for money that should incorporate cost and quality assessment (for both the grant and administrative costs);*
- *developing an approach to learning and benchmarking beyond the sub-regional group and from higher performers; and*
- *ensuring that all plans are SMART and have clear measurable outcomes.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- shared measurable targets and outcomes with partners;
- the delivery and planning of new services that match the need of the residents of Havering;
- the delivery of cost effective and quality services in respect of the Supporting People grant and administrative costs;
- effective and adequate comparative data and learning that improves the overall delivery of the programme; and
- clear outcomes of the Supporting People programme for the Council, partners and service users.

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

Recommendation

R3 Strengthen access to information and knowledge of Supporting People and service provision by:

- *working with frontline service deliverers to ensure staff are kept fully informed and confident about Supporting People services;*
- *ensuring frontline service deliverers have access to the Supporting People directory; and*
- *introducing regular monitoring of access arrangements to Supporting People at frontline services.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- frontline staff will be better informed and have a better understanding of Supporting People; and
- potential service users and their representatives will be able to find out what services are available for them, make informed choices and access services appropriately.

The implementation of this recommendation will have medium impact with low costs. This should be implemented by October 2006.

<i>Recommendation</i>
<i>R4 Take action to address all other weaknesses identified in this report.</i>

- 11 We would like to thank the staff of London Borough of Havering, particularly Mark Coleman, who made us welcome and who met our requests efficiently and courteously.

Dates of inspection: 12 to 16 June 2006

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Report

Context

The locality

- 12 The London Borough of Havering is to the east of central London. To the north and east the borough is bordered by the Essex countryside, to the south by a three mile River Thames frontage, and to the west by the neighbouring boroughs of Redbridge and Barking and Dagenham. The population of Havering is 225,000 and 6.6 per cent of the population are from BME communities.
- 13 Generally Havering is an affluent area, ranked 211th out of the 345 English local authorities, where the first ranked is the most deprived. Nevertheless, there are pockets of deprivation in Harold Hill, Collier Row, west and south Hornchurch.
- 14 There are 96,000 homes in the borough, with a high proportion of home ownership in the borough. Havering's housing need assessment in 2006 found the split in tenures of: 78.9 per cent were owner occupied, 11.6 per cent Council owned, 4.9 per cent private rented, 2.9 per cent owned by registered social landlords and 1.7 per cent other rented.
- 15 Havering has a higher than average older person's population. 46,000 were of retirement age in 2004⁹ (65 years plus for men and 60 years plus for women) which at 20.4 per cent was the highest proportion in London and compared with the London average of 13.9 per cent and the England and Wales average of 18.5 per cent.
- 16 There are good transport links to central London through underground and overground train services as well as through the A12 and A13 road systems which link into major motorway networks.
- 17 The local economy is strong in manufacturing, retailing, financial services, construction and public service employment. There are approximately 7,500 businesses in the area employing more than 76,600 people.¹⁰ Pay levels are relatively low when compared with the rest of London, although unemployment at 2.4 per cent in March 2006 is below the London and Great Britain averages.¹¹
- 18 A key element of the borough's economy is as a centre for leisure and retail. There are several local shopping centres with a major regional shopping centre in Romford with a traditional market, cinemas and nightclubs.

⁹ Mid-year 2004 Office for National Statistics

¹⁰ Office for National Statistics 2004

¹¹ Office for National Statistics claimant count 2006 (London average 4.6 per cent and Great Britain average 3.6 per cent)

The Council

- 19 The Conservative party forms the majority administration with 34 out of 54 seats. The remainder consist of 13 Residents, 3 Rainham Residents, 2 Labour, 1 Liberal Democratic and 1 British National Party.
- 20 The business of the Council is governed through a leader and cabinet structure. Since May 2004 housing has been scrutinised by a specific overview and scrutiny committee.
- 21 The Council's revenue budget for the year 2005/06 was £386 million, with revenue budgets for Housing of £49 million and Social Services of £83 million. The Council employs approximately 5,490 staff (excluding schools).
- 22 The Council was assessed as a fair 'one star' authority by the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) in December 2005 and judged to be 'improving well'.¹² As part of this assessment, the Council's housing service received a score of one out of a possible four, adult services received two out of four and children and young people's services received four out of four.¹³
- 23 In November 2004 CSCI assessed both adult services and children's services (Social Services) as providing two-star services (out of three stars).
- 24 The Council's housing strategy has been awarded fit for purpose, and in July 2006 the Council's landlord service functions transferred to an ALMO¹⁴ called 'Homes for Havering'.
- 25 The Council's vision adopted in 2002 is:

'Putting people first by creating the best opportunities, the best environment and the best services that we can for everyone who lives, works or visits here'.
- 26 This vision is contained within the community strategy drawn up by the Havering strategic partnership, with the priorities of:
 - better health and welfare;
 - increased community participation;
 - a more prosperous community;
 - protect and improve the environment;
 - a safer community; and
 - improved lifelong learning.

¹² In the 2002 CPA the Council was scored as a weak Council.

¹³ Annual Audit and Inspection Letter, January 2006

¹⁴ ALMO - Arms Length Management Organisation

- 27 The 2002 corporate development plan was initially introduced following the 2002 CPA and includes the following three key priorities:
- promote financial efficiency and value for money;
 - improve the quality of services; and
 - make Havering a better place in which to live and work.

The service

- 28 The Council acts as the ALA for the development and delivery of the Supporting People programme. The Supporting People programme is designed to meet the housing-related support needs of vulnerable people, including homeless people, older people with support needs, people with a learning disability, people with mental health problems, those with substance misuse problems, refugees, travellers and ex-offenders.
- 29 A Supporting People strategy statement was introduced for 2005/10:

'To provide a wide range of highly regarded, well planned and well established preventative housing-related support services to vulnerable people, which promote independence and diversity and expand tenure choice while offering quality and value for money'.

Beneath which sits six objectives:

- to ensure that support needs are being met appropriately and to prioritise where there is little or no provision;
 - to ensure that each service is managed and financed effectively;
 - to maintain the existence of a range of suitably qualified, knowledgeable and experienced providers within the Borough;
 - to develop a strong and multi-functional Supporting People Team to manage and monitor the programme;
 - to involve service users, their advocates and stakeholders at all stages of the Supporting People programme; and
 - to promote diversity.
- 30 Havering is one of the 20 ALAs with the lowest grant allocation from the DCLG.¹⁵ The total amount of Supporting People grant available to the Council in 2006/07 is £2,430,034, plus an underspend from 2005/06 of £32,669. In addition, the Council received an administration grant of £130,608, and the Council has funded an additional £66,000 this year for administration costs.

¹⁵ Havering Supporting People five-year strategy 2005/10

- 31** There are 14 different providers with 39 contracts, providing support to 2,250 units of accommodation. At March 2005,¹⁶ Supporting People funding in Havering was provided to client groups as follows (all of which was accommodation based):
- older people with support needs 36.35 per cent;
 - people with learning difficulties 30.32 per cent;
 - people with mental health 24.13 per cent;
 - women escaping domestic violence 4.53 per cent;
 - homeless families with support needs 2.20 per cent;
 - generic 1.58 per cent; and
 - young people leaving care 0.8 per cent.
- 32** A previous inspection of the Supporting People programme in March 2005 assessed the service as a zero-star service with uncertain prospects for improvement. The inspection made 29 recommendations, and this inspection is a re-inspection of the service.

How good is the service?

- 33** The assessment was based upon the following key issues:
- governance;
 - delivery arrangements;
 - service reviews;
 - value for money;
 - service user involvement;
 - access to services and information;
 - diversity; and
 - outcomes for service users.

¹⁶ Havering Supporting People five-year strategy 2005/10

Governance

- 34 There is a mixture of strengths and weaknesses in this area. Havering has developed a clearer role in the last year as the ALA and the commissioning body (CB) provides the strategic role required to direct and deliver the programme; that has included making difficult decisions on the de-commissioning and re-modelling of services. Supporting People now has a higher profile in the Council, and partnership working is starting to improve. Engagement of the PCT¹⁷ has recently improved, although this has yet to be sustained and deliver strategic outcomes for the programme. Similarly, attendance at the core strategy group (CSG) is now more representative but is not sufficiently developed or demonstrating outcomes. These late developments have prevented the Council from developing performance indicators for the Supporting People programme, locally or linked to other strategic objectives.

Corporate commitment

- 35 The profile of the Supporting People programme has been raised since the last inspection. This has been achieved through active member and officer commitment in raising awareness of the programme at various levels. These have included annual reports to the overview and scrutiny committee and Havering strategic partnership, members and departmental briefings, and attendance at various forums. A 'Bringing it Home' day was held in February 2006 that invited stakeholders to celebrate the provision of Supporting People as well as to consider the future development of the programme. In doing so the programme has become more meaningful to other areas of strategic work and there have been improvements in a wider engagement of partners. Members that we met were informed on the programme and its links to strategic priorities such as the Havering strategic partnership and community safety partnership.
- 36 There is clear alignment and a structure in place to govern and manage the programme. The lead member for housing holds the portfolio for Supporting People and is the chair of the CB, and the lead member for adult services is the vice chair.
- 37 In October 2005, the new directorate for sustainable communities was created. This incorporates housing, regeneration, planning and social care and the Group Director has since joined the CB. The Group Director and heads of service meet quarterly with the lead members for housing and adult services, and Supporting People forms part of their overall discussions. This provides a clear basis for considering strategically and cross-departmentally, the programme and its development.

¹⁷ PCT - Primary Care Trust

38 Partnership working is developing in the delivery of the Supporting People programme. The new directorate has improved communication across teams and departments and in raising the profile of Supporting People. Officers from the Supporting People team attend various forums including the domestic violence forum, teenage pregnancy forum, vulnerable persons' panel, Havering voluntary sector forum, Havering association of voluntary and community organisations and the partnership boards for people with learning disabilities, mental health and physical disabilities. The team have also taken up invitations to attend the vulnerable person's action group and the priority and other prolific offenders meeting. Not only do these forums enable the team to access information on client group needs and current issues relating to support needs, stakeholders are also starting to acknowledge Supporting People in their own development of strategies and action plans, in particular future plans for joint commissioning.

Commissioning body

39 The commissioning body (CB) functions well as a governing body. In April 2006 a decision was taken by the CB to strengthen its membership and the Group Director for sustainable communities joined as the third voting member, and attended his first meeting in June 2006. There are clear terms of reference and a memorandum of understanding. The meeting that we attended was well chaired and organised and demonstrated that the CB understands its role and responsibilities to the programme, to align expenditure, strategy and deal with the essential business of the programme.

40 There has been weak attendance from the PCT at the CB in the past. This low level of engagement has not solely been encountered by Supporting People but has also been an issue encountered corporately by the Council. During these times the CB has sought to involve the PCT in decision-making in order to ensure that tripartite decisions were being made and this is evidenced by the de-commissioning and re-modelling that has taken place through the service reviews that often were of relevance to the PCT.

41 In recent months the PCT has undergone internal restructuring and a level of commitment has been made for improved engagement in the CB and Supporting People programme. Evidence of this has started to emerge through attendance at the CB, CSG and involvement in the older persons' supported housing strategic review. The relationship with the PCT is also improving corporately. At director level discussions have taken place regarding the introduction of area-based health projects, input into the regeneration board and potential joint funding for new services. Therefore while these improvements are at an early stage they are showing signs of commitment, joint working and progression.

42 Commitment is evident from the CB to deliver the programme. During 2005/06 members of the CB underwent training and briefing sessions to enable them to effectively consider the service review reports. Now that the reviews are completed in order to strengthen the strategic focus of the CB meetings are to move to every other month rather than quarterly, and a strategic day is to take place during the summer. This is to enable the CB to set the strategic priorities of the programme, in particular the priority of client needs to be addressed.

- 43 The CB has taken hard decisions regarding service provision. As a result of the service reviews, decisions have been made to de-commission four care homes, reduce funding and re-model services that have included seeking support from alternative providers. The latter related to the replacement of support services from an external provider, due to the insufficient level of support being provided by an internal provider. This also indicates that the CB is providing independent governance arrangements to the Council, and both internal and external providers are being treated equally.
- 44 The CB has also taken into account a holistic approach to review some aspects of service provision. In October 2005 it agreed to a strategic review of older persons' supported housing services. This followed on from the five-year strategy identifying the low level of demand for some sheltered housing in its current form, recognition of the increasing higher older persons' population in Havering and this being the largest client group served by the Supporting People programme (1142 accommodation-based services costing £855,500 at March 2005¹⁸). The review involves a partnership approach with other stakeholders with an overall aim to improve the opportunity for older people to live independently regardless of their tenure.

Core strategy group

- 45 The CSG has recently improved its attendance, since its late commencement in 2004 but the benefits are yet to be seen. The Supporting People team has reported to the CSG on matters that include budgets, the Supporting People team work and annual plan and external reports. The Supporting People team have managed to significantly increase attendance levels at the last two meetings immensely (April and June 2006). They now demonstrate representative and participative attendance from all relevant partners, including health, probation, providers and council departments that include the YOT,¹⁹ DAAT,²⁰ adult and children services. This level of full membership is relatively new and the CSG is not yet clearly strategically developed. However, the previous low level of attendance has prevented the CSG from being fully inclusive of all partners.
- 46 There are terms of reference and a memorandum of understanding but the CSG has yet to set out its own work plan, and is currently working to the Supporting People team work plan. For example provider members of the CSG that we met were aware of the terms of reference for the group, but were not clear on the role of the group in terms of strategic delivery, programme and performance monitoring and considered that there was a dialogue gap from the CB to the CSG.

¹⁸ Supporting People five-year strategy 2005/10

¹⁹ YOT - Youth Offending Team

²⁰ DAAT - Drug and Alcohol Action Team

- 47 The Supporting People team is aware that the operation of the CSG needs to be strengthened and considers that the increased level of attendance seen at the last two meetings (approximately 20) is the first step towards this. There has been some level of service user attendance at the last four CSG meetings and four specific service users have now been identified to attend the CSG regularly. This is a positive step in representing service users from women escaping domestic violence, people with mental health issues, people with learning disabilities and older people. They have all attended some CSG meetings but are yet to develop their understanding of their role on the CSG.

Accountable Officer

- 48 The Accountable Officer plays a key role in promoting and managing the Supporting People programme. The Head of Housing has been the Accountable Officer since 2004. He chairs the CSG and is seen as the link between the CSG and CB. He is an active champion and advocate for Supporting People and promoted the programme at various levels, including member, leadership team and scrutiny and overview level, as well as to external partners to the Council. This has resulted in the Supporting People team having a more engaged level of involvement in various meetings and forums.

Partnership arrangements

- 49 Probation plays an active role in the delivery of the programme. It has always been an active member on the CB and more recently on the CSG and considers that the structure and membership changes of the CB and CSG have improved the governance of the programme. Satisfactory MAPPA²¹ arrangements are in place with input from Council officers as required. The partnership in place enables the needs of offenders to be given some priority in the future delivery of the programme, particularly as there is no current provision for offenders in Havering under the Supporting People programme.
- 50 As referred to earlier there has been some lack of engagement from the PCT in the past, although this is starting to improve. The PCT has actively engaged in the joint commissioning of Paines Brook an extra care home between adult services and Supporting People. This is due to open in July 2006 and there has been active involvement from partners in developing the home and support provision that will be provided. A further redundant Council owned sheltered block has also been identified for a further extra care home on the same principles.
- 51 The Supporting People team is developing its work with the voluntary sector. It recognises that the voluntary sector is an important aspect in accessing information on client groups and needs due to its level of contact and understanding of the needs of the local community. Officers attend voluntary forums, and membership of the CSG has also been extended to the voluntary sector with one member attending the last two meetings.

²¹ MAPPA - Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements

- 52 Supporting People in Havering has yet to develop shared performance indicators with its partners, for example the impact of Supporting People on hospital admissions. While partners are aware of the impact Supporting People has upon their service areas, PAF²² indicators and local performance indicators have not been used or developed to establish the outcome of the programme. This is an area of development that the Council is aware of and considers that the improved strategic approach that is now in place across partners will enable this to be developed.

Cross-authority partnership working

- 53 Havering takes an active role in the East London sub-regional group. Although the group is not as advanced as some of the other sub-regional groups there has been some collaborative work, including sharing of good practice and QAF scores for consistency and accreditation across six of the authorities of the group (including Havering) for the introduction of steady state contracts. The sub-regional group is currently working on the development of various initiatives that include the future of service reviews (that has been agreed in principle by Havering's CB), outcome monitoring and an approach towards value for money. From June 2006 Havering's Supporting People Manager has taken over the role of chair on the sub-regional group.

Delivery arrangements

- 54 There is a mix of strengths and weaknesses in this area. There is strong corporate leadership and commitment within the Council to support the delivery of the programme, and a strong and committed Supporting People team to deliver it. There are further elements that enable the programme to be delivered including financial and risk management, clear eligibility criteria, some areas of the work plan and a positive relationship with providers. There are areas of weakness that require further development, including needs mapping, the work plan, contract negotiations and performance management of the programme, in particular outcomes for service users.

Corporate commitment

- 55 There are corporate frameworks in place to assist and support the Supporting People programme. These include the frameworks for performance management, financial monitoring, leadership training, partnership working and a clear corporate agenda to improve services. This provides Supporting People with a robust framework and basis for delivering the programme, and has already assisted other service areas within the Council to improve.

²² PAF - Performance Assessment Framework

- 56** There is a more aligned and conducive framework in place to deliver the Supporting People programme now. Clear leadership from the Chief Executive of the Council led to restructuring in October 2005 that brought both housing and adult services under the same sustainable communities' directorate. This has started to further build strategic and operational links across the services and associated partners. In addition, in December 2005 line management for the Supporting People Manager was transferred directly to the Accountable Officer. This provides clearer and transparent reporting lines and also reduces an element of conflict of interest as the former line manager²³ had direct responsibility for some of the internal provider provision.
- 57** The financial support to the programme has been enhanced by the Council. In 2006/07 it provided a £66,000 top-up for the administrative grant and the Council's medium-term financial strategy (MTSF) gives commitment to funding the grant should it be reduced by the DCLG. The new directorate also provides the opportunity for alternative funding streams to support the Supporting People programme. This is in recognition of the impact Supporting People has upon other department objectives and therefore where viable consideration may be given to using housing surpluses, that include the private sector leasing initiative and housing capital funding.
- 58** Supporting People are now involved at the early stages of strategic developments. As part of the housing strategy four bids were put forward to the Housing Corporation for supported housing schemes for 2006/08, only one has been agreed for people with learning disabilities. The Council is committed to supporting the provision of some of these services through alternative funding. On the 27 July 2006 a paper is due to go to Cabinet to seek approval for capital funding for one, a second stage women's refuge. This will provide 14 family-sized units for women escaping domestic violence.
- 59** There is Supporting People representation on the corporate initiative to introduce telecare for households. This is particularly relevant as the Supporting People team have been able to identify the elements of the service that would be eligible for Supporting People funding. There are also plans to start a regeneration board that will include key stakeholders in the early stages of regeneration areas. Supporting People are to be one of the attendees with an aim to ensure that the area has a sufficient infrastructure to meet the needs of the residents.
- 60** The last year for Supporting People in Havering has very much focused on the completion of the service reviews. This was in order to meet the DCLG March 2006 deadline which the Council met and as a result savings have been achieved. However, as the service reviews commenced later than many other ALAs the Council has not yet been able to use the identified savings fully to commission and introduce new services.

²³ Although overall management of the internal provision is under the remit of the Head of the Housing, the previous manager had more direct contact with the service on a day-to-day basis

- 61** Partnership working has taken place to extend current or consider new services, many of which will have an impact on wider reaching issues other than Supporting People. For example:
- from April 2006 Supporting People have jointly funded the floating support provision for young people (aged 16 to 24) that initially commenced as a pilot through the housing strategy. This has been in recognition of its success in reducing the level of tenancy breakdowns and the identified need for floating support within Havering. Supporting People have also been able to identify a potential site for the housing needs department's intended cooling off initiative again for young people;
 - the accommodation stream of the mental health partnership board has started to consider the impact of bed blocking at Mascall's hospital. Research is being considered that NELMHT²⁴ completed to identify the need for move on accommodation. The board is initially considering the adequacy of the hospital in recognising support needs at an early stage, as well as whether current service provision meets the level of need;
 - funding from the Housing Corporation has just been agreed for an eight unit scheme for people with learning disabilities. The scheme will provide light to medium level support that will facilitate move on from higher support schemes and then into generic housing with floating support. This supports the Council's aim to provide a range of services to suit varying needs and the joint up strategic approach between partners; and
 - inclusion of Supporting People in the terms of reference and attendance for the 'Children in need and housing panel'. With Supporting People planning to engage with the established Young People's Service Review Group in considering the need for support for young people, and the remodelling of current service provision.

Supporting People team

- 62** There has been a step change in developing the capacity of the Supporting People programme through the Supporting People team. A permanent manager commenced in May 2005, a service review and development officer in August 2005 and recruitment is underway for a business support officer. The contracts officer has been in post since before the last inspection. This has created a solid base for the Supporting People programme and the latter recruitment will bring the team to its permanent position of four officers. We found that officers are positive and enthusiastic to develop and deliver the programme and a range of partners that we spoke to were very complimentary of the team, particularly the manager that is considered to be one of the key driving forces behind the improvements in the delivery of the programme.

²⁴ NELMHT - North East London Mental Health Trust

- 63 The team have accessed training and development in order to raise their levels of expertise. The Supporting People Manager has undertaken a commissioning course with the ALG²⁵ and in-house procurement training, and is currently developing a commissioning and procurement policy for Supporting People with a consultant. As a small team it has also developed through the use of shadowing and informal on the job training. This has collectively broadened the knowledge and skills of the team, and their ability and capacity to deliver the programme.
- 64 There was some concern from providers regarding the size of the team, in particular when officers are away from work and the ability of the team to provide sufficient cover and advice during these times. This is more of a concern currently as one of the permanent officers is due to go on maternity leave. With regards to covering the role a decision has not yet been taken to recruit a temporary member of staff as there is some belief by the team that they will be able to cover the duties. However, the Supporting People Manager will explore this option if required.

Grant conditions and eligibility criteria

- 65 Clear eligibility criteria is in place. Although when compared with its peers the Council was quite late in introducing eligibility criteria. However, it has been done in an informative way and has been further refined recently by applying a traffic light system that provides an easier reference. It has been reinforced at every service review and publicised through various mechanisms and is on the website. This has led to the providers having a clear understanding of housing-related support and provision of care.
- 66 Overall providers are satisfied with the criteria. Providers that attended the focus group and five out of the seven providers surveyed were satisfied with the clarity of the eligibility of the criteria. One of the two that were dissatisfied with the criteria indicated that they had not seen it.

Contracts

- 67 The Council has not yet developed its approach to long-term contract negotiations. Service reviews have addressed interim contract negotiations and there are plans to develop the approach to steady state contracts. However, this is very much at an early stage and being considered as part of the East London sub-regional group's agenda.
- 68 Providers displayed a mixed level of satisfaction with the approach to contract negotiations. Most providers were satisfied with the approach taken to contract negotiations to date, although there were some providers that were not aware of the future arrangements for contract negotiations. This is accepted by Havering as the long-term arrangements for contract negotiations is not yet an area that has been explored with providers.

²⁵ ALG - Association of London Government

Five-year strategy and needs mapping

- 69 The Council has a Supporting People five-year strategy and this was submitted to the DCLG by the March 2005 deadline. However, there is honest recognition from the Council that the strategy is not as robust as it could be. It accepts that there was limited stakeholder and service user consultation on the five-year strategy. This was due to a number of factors, but mainly the time constraints of preparing the strategy, pressures at the time on the Supporting People team and some lack of engagement from some stakeholders. The Council plan to review the strategy in 2006/07 to ensure that consultation is carried out more effectively.
- 70 The strategy sets out the objectives of the programme, details service provision and need (where known) for specific client groups, links with other strategies and some reference to how performance indicators can be used to monitor the programme. Based on the need information known and the clear lack of some services, for example for offenders and drug and alcohol, it clearly sets the top client group priorities for developing services in 2006/07 as:
- older people (Paines Brook extra care services);
 - offenders (floating support);
 - homeless people (floating support);
 - homeless people (enhancement of floating support);
 - people escaping domestic violence (second stage refuge);
 - leaving care (shared house); and
 - drug and alcohol misuse (floating support).
- 71 Needs mapping and analysis requires further refinement. In response to the last inspection and before the strategy was submitted to the DCLG the Council collated further needs information for the strategy, and identified as an action needs research where this was not known. This included the BME housing needs survey (commissioned June 2005) and the older persons' strategic review (commissioned November 2005). These are positive examples and should provide valuable information to both Supporting People and other council departments on these groups.
- 72 The collation of data in other areas has not been as sufficiently developed. The Supporting People team have been working with providers and partners to collate data to inform the areas where need is not sufficiently known. For example, there are gaps in needs analysis for offenders and drug and alcohol misuse, and partners are currently developing systems to capture this information. However, hard information is not yet available. The absence of fully comprehensive needs analysis of all client groups prevents the Council from making robust strategic decisions on new services. This is currently encountered as the Council has not yet decided where the remaining service review savings is to be allocated and accounts for approximately £333,000. This prevents the development of new services or the enhancement of existing ones.

- 73** The Council has carried out a survey of travellers needs. However, this has not yet been used to inform service needs in relation to the Supporting People programme. The Council has predominantly used the survey to consider the future location of a traveller's site in Havering. The survey found a small number of travellers, 34 in total and the Supporting People team plan to use this information more in the review of the five-year strategy.
- 74** The borough is not adequately capturing reports of domestic violence. There is no central register that incorporates all reports of domestic violence across service areas and partners. Data is currently taken from police reports, and is potentially under-counted as this does not reflect reports to Council services. Recent statistics from the domestic violence drop in centres in Havering report that 28 per cent of contact is from men experiencing domestic violence - although there has been no further analysis of this data to indicate whether it is a new or changing trend.
- 75** Providers are informed on the Council's development of the needs mapping and the proposal to review the strategy. While they were aware of some of the needs gaps they were satisfied that the Council had adequately identified the gaps and were aware of some of the work underway to try and address this.

Work planning

- 76** There is a work plan in place for the Supporting People team. It reflects the objectives and priorities of the five-year strategy, and has also incorporated other priorities, for example the recommendations from the last Audit Commission inspection. It incorporates deadlines, officer responsibility and resource implications. Objectives in the team's performance development appraisals reflect those in the work plan, and progression on the work plan is regularly reported to the CB and CSG.
- 77** The work plan is not completely SMART. It does not detail how the actions link to other strategies or Council work plans, or how they link to targets set by partners, for example health and probation. While a key outcome is detailed for each action these are not comprehensively measurable, and provide an overview of the outcome rather than a tangible measurable outcome. For example, there is an action to carry out a critical analysis of referrals and acceptances of homeless people with Supporting People needs both within and outside the borough, with the outcome noted as 'effective access to services'. Many of the outcomes are phrased in this way and without a measurable descriptor of 'effective' it is difficult to establish how the delivery of the action will be measured. The plan also does not note the actual date of the completed action. These weaknesses may prevent the Council from monitoring and delivering the actions to timescale, as well as to the desired target due to the lack of clarification.

Performance monitoring and management

- 78** Performance monitoring has not been developed outside of the standard Supporting People performance indicators and QAF scores. There has been no development of statistics linked to the objectives of health or probation, and this has been further hindered by the late engagement of the PCT with the programme. Neither have the Council developed local performance indicators. This prevents the Council from having a full picture of the outcome of the programme and its impact on other strategic priorities.
- 79** However, the performance data that is in place is regularly reported and considered by the CB and CSG. The report on the work plan to the CB is by exception, and both groups receive reports on performance indicators and QAF scores. The Supporting People Manager also provided the CB with a short report in June 2006 that pulled together the issues raised by the CSG over the last 12 months. This was to maintain the focus of the CB on key issues and matters outstanding.
- 80** Financial monitoring and reporting is in place. Regular reports are provided to the CB that include expenditure and projections based on previous occupancy levels, new contract values and new spend. Corporately Supporting People expenditure is monitored as part of the housing strategy budget group, and through the general fund provision at executive level (although this is only by significant variances). There have been under-spends on the grant in previous years that have been carried over each year. The £12,314 under-spend in 2004/05 was used for additional staff to complete the service reviews, and further under-spends of £32,699 (2005/06) and projected £496,273 (2006/07) are to be used for new service provision.
- 81** Performance monitoring of providers is in place. Providers are required to provide quarterly work-book information which is entered onto a spreadsheet that incorporates a traffic light system. This is monitored by the contract officer and areas of concern are raised with the provider. Performance returns have been provided to the DCLG on time, although it was not clear how the team had used the performance information to improve performance other than at a local level with providers.
- 82** Risk management is a feature of the programme. Supporting People has its own risk map and contingency plan that adequately identifies risk for the programme. It includes specific details of the risk area, type, risk manager responsibility, level of risk and the steps to be taken to avoid risk. The risk plan has been considered by the CSG and is reviewed every three months by the CB.

Fairer charging

- 83** The Council has been late to introduce fairer charging for Supporting People. Following some internal debate on how the charges would be covered, this is one of the areas that the Supporting People Manager pursued following her commencement and it was introduced in April 2006 with Supporting People taking responsibility to cover the charge. Information available on fairer charging is set out in an easy to read and clear format. However, this late introduction may mean that some service users (current and former) have missed the opportunity to access fairer charging since it was nationally available for Supporting People.
- 84** There has been a low response level for fairer charging assessments. Across both internal and external providers 138 service users were identified with potential eligibility for fairer charging assessments. At the time of the inspections only 37 had responded: 20 did not want an assessment; 12 had not yet applied for housing benefit; 2 queried the charges; and 3 had been assessed with a nil charge. Providers have been asked to again promote fairer charging at scheme meetings, and some of the schemes that we visited had posters promoting fairer charging. However, at the moment there is a potential 101 current service users that have not taken up the opportunity to have a fairer charging assessment.
- 85** There is a monitoring system in place for new service users. New service users are being asked to complete a fairer charge assessment pro-forma at the same time as applying for housing benefit. The Supporting People team will then monitor the award of housing benefit through the provider and pursue a fairer charge assessment if required. All applicants are offered a welfare benefit check as part of the fairer charge assessment.

Relationships with providers

- 86** The relationship between the Supporting People team and providers is very positive. Providers that we met had seen vast improvement in communication, the quality of information and the stability of the Supporting People team in the last year. Six out of the seven providers that returned our survey were satisfied/very satisfied with the advice and support provided from the team, and the same number were satisfied with the arrangements for involving providers in the delivery and development of the programme. Providers felt that the team were always willing and able to assist them, and this had assisted in developing their services and the outcomes for service users.
- 87** The provider forum is well attended with a mix of internal and external providers. Our observation of a provider forum found it to be well managed and informative. Participants see the forum as an opportunity to forge links with other providers, learn and share good practice. Officers have tried to work with providers to make the forum more provider led as well as improving its strategic focus. However, this has yet to be developed further, although the team have recently introduced a provider improvement group that will look at operational issues, with an aim to enabling the forum to be more strategically focused.
- 88** There is a level playing field between internal and external providers. This is detailed further in 'Service reviews'.

Cross-authority working

- 89 The ALA is open to learning and cross-authority working. Through networking and informal contact points the Supporting People team has gained information and good practice from better performing ALAs. This has been applied in the areas of fairer charging, complaints and the design of the website. Further information has been obtained but is yet to be used in the areas of procurement, performance monitoring and leaseholders. The CB has also commissioned the Supporting People Manager to research good practice in the operation of CSGs across high performing London ALAs.
- 90 Havering is a member of the East London sub-regional group and this provides the opportunity to discuss good practice and common themes. Havering sees itself as a key player, and this is likely to develop further with the Supporting People Manager now chairing the group.
- 91 Joint working in service provision has taken place with the London Borough of Redbridge. In collaboration with Redbridge a home improvement agency scheme was extended to Havering in September 2005. The scheme is based in Havering with each partner funding the scheme by £80,000 (£40,000 Supporting People and £40,000 Council matched funding). The partners are currently developing the strategic and operational delivery of the scheme through a joint steering group. The outcomes of the scheme are detailed in 'Outcomes for service users'.

Service reviews

- 92 This is an area where strengths outweigh weaknesses. There is a robust framework in place for service services, with a clear appeals process and regular monitoring of the outcome of reviews at team and CB level. Service reviews were completed by the DCLG deadline. The service reviews have not only identified huge savings, but have led to re-modelled services and improvements to service users. The one weakness is the late progression on the service reviews that would have reaped benefits at a much earlier stage if progressed earlier.
- 93 There is a framework in place for applying consistency and monitoring to service reviews. All completed service reviews since June 2005 have been reviewed by the Supporting People Manager, and there is one officer responsible for overseeing action plans, monitoring and follow-up visits. All service reviews have been reported to the CB as well as a quarterly update on the progress on action plans from service reviews.
- 94 Service reviews were completed by the March 2006 deadline set by the DCLG. This is despite the Council being very late in commencing its service review process, and only introducing a robust and thorough process in June 2005. The reviews were based on unit costs with high cost services being prioritised. The completion of the service reviews has been one of the main focuses of the Supporting People team, and during 2005/06 the service reviews identified year on savings of £684,928. This is quite an extensive level of saving considering that Havering's Supporting People grant is £2,430,034.

- 95** Despite a number of service reviews identifying the need to decommission or re-model services providers were generally positive about the approach taken to service reviews. Four out of the seven providers that responded to our survey were satisfied with the process, of the remaining three that were dissatisfied one was an older persons' provider and had not experienced a validation visit and two had encountered poor experience under the former review process (pre-June 2005). The providers that we met were positive about the process, and considered that service reviews had also assisted them in improving areas within their own services, for example improving the quality/level of information to service users.
- 96** The Council has taken a corporate and holistic approach to older people's supported housing, and a consultant is now carrying out a strategic review. This is due to be reported in July 2006. The Council is aware that the review may require difficult corporate decisions, but is quite clear that it will be in the interest of the wider population of older people in Havering. In particular for those that are not currently adequately provided for and the large percentage (80) of older people in Havering that are owner occupiers. The review will be followed up with wide consultation with the older population, incorporated QAF validation assessments of current services and an aim to introduce a new model at the end of 2006/07.
- 97** There is provision across the sub-regional groups to use review officers from different ALAs. Members have the opportunity to bring in expertise in particular areas from other member ALAs. Havering have not been required to do this but have participated in another ALAs service reviews. This also provides a valuable tool for learning and the application of consistency across the sub-regions in service reviews.
- 98** Ineligible services and areas for improvement have been found in both internal and external providers. Examples of these are as follows.
- Inadequate support was identified at an internal hostel provision with support staff providing both housing-related support and housing management functions. To improve the quality of support a pilot project started in May 2006 with an external provider to provide the support to the families. The service review also identified a number of housing management areas that the housing needs department has since addressed, for example reviewing its written policies and information to tenants including the handbook.
 - Remodelling at a scheme for people with mental health issues has led to an improved focus on a moving on approach. This has partially been achieved but some of the service users have been living in the scheme for a number of years and further work is to be done.

- While no savings have been accomplished at a scheme for people with learning disabilities, the service review identified remodelling to emphasis housing-related support that has re-focused the scheme to provide a more enabling model of support than before.
 - Remodelling of a leaving care scheme is currently under consideration to consider extending the level of support to include some overnight/evening support.
- 99** Fair and equivocal treatment has been applied to both internal and external providers. Both have undergone a robust service review process that has resulted in the providers considering improving the delivery of support. In one instance with the Council it had to consider whether it was the appropriate provider for support and in agreement with Supporting People decided that an external provider would be better equipped to provide support for the families in the homeless hostels. This means that providers with the necessary skills are considered to provide the support rather than the Council not considering alternative methods of service provision. Providers that we spoke to that had been required to re-model services had found the Supporting People team supportive in this process and on hand to provide guidance during the re-modelling phase
- 100** There is a clear appeals process in place. The one provider that has used the appeals process found it accessible and with clear guidance on the expectations from both parties. They considered that the Supporting People team and Accountable Officer handled the appeal well and appropriately.
- 101** While the outcome of the service reviews have been overall positive, the delay in the Council progressing the service review programme has had an impact on the development of the programme. Earlier commencement of the review programme would potentially have led to earlier and more outcomes for service users (both existing and potential) through earlier de-commissioning, re-modelling and the identification of the year-on savings, that would have ultimately led to earlier improvements in current services and the development of new services.

Value for money

- 102** Weaknesses outweigh strengths in this area due to the lack of a developed approach to value for money within Supporting People. The programme has made savings as a result of the service reviews in 2005/06 that have refocused the provision of housing-related support in Havering. However, beyond the service reviews an approach to value for money is not in place, and the Council has not developed a sufficient and challenging approach to benchmarking against the better performing ALAs.

How do costs compare?

- 103** Costs per unit excluding community alarms and sheltered housing compare well with London and England averages. Unit cost and spend per average head of population is some way below the region and England averages, although when excluding community alarms and sheltered housing the unit costs are somewhat higher. These figures (shown in Table 1) should be treated with some caution as there has been a number of changes since the platinum cut data was produced.

Table 1 Unit costs comparison of Supporting People grant per head of population - 2003/04

	Per head of population	Per unit	Per unit excluding community alarms	Per unit excluding alarms and sheltered housing
Havering	£0.23	£21.68	£23.05	£104.96
London	£0.97	£42.37	£48.73	£68.40
England	£0.70	£28.30	£34.71	£76.37

Source: DCLG sourced material 2003/04 (platinum cut)

- 104** Similarly, at the platinum cut the Council were shown to have some higher costing services than its peers. DCLG data showed that services for women escaping domestic violence were higher than the London averages, and services for those with mental health issues were higher than London and England averages.
- 105** Benchmarking with other ALAs has been limited. In May 2005 the Supporting People team collated benchmarking data with some of its neighbouring boroughs that had a similar demographic make-up. This was used in the service reviews post-June 2005. It was based on the platinum cut, and was not a fully comprehensive piece of work as it included some potential anomalies attached to the calculation of costs. The comparison's found that overall the services for young people and homeless families were below local averages (both of which have since been re-modelled or in the process of) and the other services were in excess of the local averages (many of which have been subject to re-modelling other than those subject to the strategic review for older people's supported housing services).

- 106** A wider and consistent approach to benchmarking has not been developed. Many of the neighbouring boroughs that the Council compared itself to are within the East sub-regional group and have been awarded zero stars for Supporting People by the Audit Commission. There has also been some reliance on benchmarking costs based on the platinum cut data. This prevents the Council from assessing itself against the higher and better performing ALAs, as well as more recent up-to-date data.

How is value for money managed?

- 107** Through the service reviews the Council has identified a large on year saving of £684,928. This is a positive aspect that has not only refocused the delivery of current housing-related support, but also frees up the finance required to introduce new required services. The savings were principally identified due to the application of the eligibility criteria for housing-related support, and some comparative data (as highlighted in 'How do costs compare?'). The Council has not introduced a systematic value for money approach for Supporting People and therefore beyond the service reviews it has not yet established how this area will be developed. Although this is one of the areas that the sub-region is currently leading on.
- 108** In our survey five out of the seven providers were satisfied with the Council's approach to determining value for money of their services. One was dissatisfied (but had not undergone a validation visit due to it being part of the strategic review for older people's supported housing) and one did not comment.
- 109** The Council has not done an analysis or benchmarking of the cost effectiveness of the use of administrative grant. This would cover the Supporting People team, equipment and so forth. The team does have access to corporate services and is in the process of working with other departments in order to access corporate services that will include legal services for contract arrangements. However, presently the Council has not assessed the cost effectiveness of the grant.
- 110** The Council is taking a cost effective approach in considering joint commissioning where possible. Joint procurement of the new Paines Brook service with adult services has accomplished savings and negotiated service delivery provision. The joint procurement not only reduced the cost to Supporting People by £15,000 but further negotiations with the contractor regarding the hours of provision reduced costs any reduction to service delivery. The latter understanding and ability to challenge and negotiate future service provision will be a useful resource for Supporting People and the new schemes that it intends to introduce, for example the floating support services.

Service user involvement

- 111 There is a mixture of strengths and weaknesses in this area. The Council has started to build the framework for service user involvement through the development of a strategy, action plan and identification of four service users to be on the CSG. The team has also extended its knowledge of community groups that work with minority groups and have established links with some. Outcomes are currently limited to service reviews and some involvement on information formats, and are yet to be established for the delivery of the programme.
- 112 Some additional capacity has been given to this area. As a result of the top-up administrative grant from the Council, the Supporting People team have temporarily recruited an officer to specifically identify and establish links with community groups. The officer has now mapped the established community groups and made contact with the majority of them. This has included attendance at meetings. This has widened knowledge and contact with some specialist client groups/advocacy agencies that work with minority groups in Havering, including the BME community, those with HIV/Aids, travellers (through the education welfare officer) and those with sickle cell and thalassaemia.
- 113 The Supporting People team introduced a service user involvement strategy in March 2005 based on DCLG guidelines. The action plan for the strategy has recently been updated and has key tasks that incorporate deadlines, lead officer and cost implications. The action plan provides a framework for service user involvement. However, outcomes are not attached to the actions within the plan, therefore it is difficult to see how the Council will measure the delivery of the action and whether it has overall contributed to service user involvement.
- 114 There has been some consultation with client groups on the format of information. The Supporting People team have met with client groups representing people with a physical/sensory disability, people with mental health problems, and to some extent, people with a learning disability. For example, feedback was sought from attendees at Havering Association for People with Disabilities (HAD) on the layout and wording of Supporting People information, and this has been taken into consideration in the design of the layout of the Supporting People leaflet. The team plan to extend the level of consultation and use it to inform further information and publications.
- 115 Service users have been involved in service reviews. Providers that we met were satisfied with the level of involvement and five out of the seven providers that returned our survey were satisfied with the involvement of service users in the review process. Two were dissatisfied although one had not had a service review validation visit completed.
- 116 The Supporting People team have used different formats during service reviews to meet the needs of the particular client group. For example in service reviews for people with learning disabilities pictorial questionnaires have been used to survey their views on the support provided and an advocacy worker was employed for another to support the service users in participating in the review. These have been developed in order to maximise the level of input from service users.

- 117 There has been some work to improve the awareness of service users on the outcome of service reviews. The Supporting People team have started to meet with specific client groups to discuss their format requirements for reports, and have so far carried out this process with a group of older people and people with learning disabilities. As a result, the format and template of the report for service reviews has been reviewed and people at these two schemes received reports tailored to their needs, for example for people with learning disabilities a pictorial template was used with easy to follow ticking and scoring charts. This provides service users with a report outlining the key issues of the review that is tailored to their needs.
- 118 Service users are not yet systematically involved in developing the programme. Other than the completed service reviews, service users are not yet involved in this level of development. The Council has identified four service users to attend the CSG that represent different client groups. The Supporting People team see the role of the service users as fundamental to developing this level of involvement. The service users have attended the CSG meetings to various degrees and are yet to develop their understanding of their role, but this is a positive step taken by the Council in developing this area.

Access to services and information

- 119 There is a mixture of strengths and weaknesses in this area. Overall there is range of information on Supporting People available directly and through the website, including a complaints process specifically for Supporting People. The Council is also considering access and choice for Supporting People provision through the current consideration of floating support. The one area of weakness that pulls this area down is the lack of publicity and knowledge at face-to-face frontline services.

Information and access to services

- 120 There is a range of information available on Supporting People services. Leaflets have been redesigned and distributed that are clear and easy to understand. Six out of the seven providers surveyed were satisfied with the level of information available to service users, the provider that was dissatisfied specifically related to information regarding older peoples' services and future plans for the service. Supporting People newsletters for providers and service users are informative and articles on Supporting People have featured in the Council's newsletter that is distributed to every household.

- 121** Knowledge and publicity on Supporting People at frontline level is mixed. During our reality checks to frontline services, including housing offices, PASCs²⁶ and library services we found varying levels of information and knowledge. Leaflets and information on Supporting People and services for vulnerable people were not consistently displayed at all offices, and the majority of staff that we spoke to were not able to provide us with sufficient information on Supporting People. This is despite as earlier referred to in 'Governance' the profile of Supporting People being raised within the Council that has included briefings to various departments and teams. This is a particular area of concern in relation to the PASCs that were introduced as the Council's customer facing information services. The apparent lack of knowledge may prevent potential service users from being informed on the services provided by Supporting People and accessing appropriate services.
- 122** An area of strength was the response received in telephone contact to the Council and general signposting, particularly in relation to the options of support for those experiencing domestic violence and the three drop in services provided across the borough (which was an area of weakness found in the last inspection). This is positive as data held by Havering records that most contact to Havering is made via telephone.
- 123** The service has clear aims to develop and extend its provision of floating support. With a small programme it has considered the need to have services that are reactive to a range of need, and plans to develop generic floating support that will be able to provide support for most client groups - although there is some recognition that client groups including people with mental health and women escaping domestic violence will need specialist support. This will address the need for support to some small client groups that would not necessarily be sufficient to demand a support service solely dedicated to them, for example BME communities, traveller's and people with HIV/Aids. A pilot is currently under consideration to be joined funded between Supporting People and housing and the recently formed vulnerable adult's panel will act as an initial referral point.
- 124** The expansion of floating support is also seen as a method to improve move-on provision. Both Supporting People and providers consider that the development of floating support will address some of the current issues with move-on. It will enable service users to move on to lower levels of support with floating support provision from higher level accommodation-based schemes. As referred to in 'Delivery arrangements' the specific requirements of people with mental health is being looked at through the mental health partnership board, although the provision of floating support is considered to be key across many client groups.

²⁶ Public Access Service Centres - there are three across the borough offering information on Council services.

Website

- 125 The Supporting People web page is well designed, informative and easy to use. It offers a range of information, including the Havering Supporting People service directory, five-year strategy and update, complaints form and the Supporting People newsletter. It provides a link to the national Supporting People website although it has no links to other partner websites. The web page is in plain English and easy to navigate and understand. While the Supporting People leaflets have a strapline indicating that the information can be requested in alternative formats the Council's website does not include a strapline. This may prevent people from accessing information in the format required.

Complaints

- 126 There is a Supporting People complaints procedure. This was introduced in June 2005 and there is a specific leaflet that provides guidance on the process. The leaflet is well laid out and clear. However, the one item that it lacks is the timescales associated with a complaint. We were informed that these would be governed by the Council's corporate complaint timescales and that the leaflet would be updated to reflect this. However, the current absence of this information prevents the complainant from being clear on when their complaint would be responded to. Complaints feature as a reporting item to the CB, and to date only one complaint has been received regarding the Supporting People programme.

Diversity

- 127 Weaknesses outweigh strengths in this area. There have been some recent developments that will assist Supporting People in understanding the needs of the wider community more, and some corporate commitment to meeting the needs of specific groups, including the BME community, travellers and older people. However, these developments are at the information gathering stage and have not yet been used to tailor services or develop new services. Gaps also remain in information regarding some client groups, and where Supporting People have been responsive to some specific client groups in the delivery of the programme this is not consistently being delivered across all client groups.
- 128 There has been a mixed development in the collection and analysis of the needs within Havering for Supporting People. The five-year strategy incorporated some needs analysis in order to identify the priorities for new services in 2006/07, and work is underway to collate more data as detailed in 'Delivery arrangements'. However, there are current gaps in needs information for numerous client groups, specifically in relation the BME community, offenders and people with substance misuse. For some of the smaller client groups, Supporting People is aiming to fill the gap through the introduction of generic floating support, and is currently working on this development.

- 129** The Council is starting to develop its approach to needs analysis of minority communities. A BME stakeholders conference was held in March 2006 as a forum to establish how the Council and community groups can work together, and the BME housing need survey is to be reported at the end of June 2006. In July 2006 a BME housing and homelessness conference is to be held that will incorporate discussion around the support needs for the BME community. This is starting to lead to a better understanding of the BME community, for example the March conference high-lighted the Chinese community as a much larger community than previously known.
- 130** The Supporting People team have started to build up their understanding of the BME community. Through the network provision from the March 2006 conference it has mail-shot the attendees for assistance in developing the approach to Supporting People - although it has not had any response to date. The Council is aware that many of the community groups are quite small and discrete, and it is hoped that corporate or larger based work, such as the BME housing and homelessness conference will assist in their ability to participate.
- 131** The ethnicity breakdown of current service users has been gathered by the Supporting People team. This has been collated from providers and will be used to compare the levels of need identified in the BME housing need survey in order to identify any disparities in service provision. Initial findings highlight a high level of BME women in the refuge (when compared to Census data).
- 132** Corporately, the Council is using the travellers housing needs survey to inform future planning need for a site. An education officer has been working with the travellers for some time, and the Council's main focus is to consider the location of a site. It is in the process of incorporating planning provision in the Local Development Framework, and in order to expand its knowledge and understanding of the traveller community, a member of the housing strategy group recently attended the national traveller's conference.
- 133** The Council is strategically considering the demand for supported housing and services for the older population. The strategic review led by Supporting People forms the main thrust of this review, and is based upon the high level of older people that are currently owner occupiers in Havering, currently 80 per cent. The review will consider service provision across tenures with an aim to supporting people to live in their own homes. The Council is also working with Age Concern to pilot an 'equity release' scheme that will enable people to stay in their homes longer through the release of equity to improve their. It is envisaged that the pilot will reach a wider selection of people than the home improvement agency, and an older persons board has also been set up that will include health and social care, with an aim to improving the experiences of older people.

- 134** Supporting People have been responsive to the needs of some of the client groups that it serves. As detailed in 'Service user involvement'; some consultation has been sought on the format of Supporting People information, including leaflet and forms and service review reports to service users; information has been designed specifically and advocacy workers used during service reviews; and there is a consistent strap-line that appears on Supporting People information (that is absent from corporate documentation). This provides some sensitivity to the needs of the community that Supporting People is intended to serve.
- 135** There is work underway to develop the awareness and response to groups. These include:
- attendance by Supporting People at various boards and meetings, as referred to in the 'Governance' section; and specifically seeking information regarding;
 - the current work underway by the service user involvement officer as referred to in the 'Service user involvement' section;
 - specifically seeking information on client groups that include the BME housing needs survey and work with adult services regarding those who are physical and sensory impaired. With consideration to attaching units for this client group to the new potential extra care site; and
 - Supporting People attend the vulnerable persons panel. This serves as a multi-agency panel to identify and address needs of individuals and has met three times. The panel is starting to make a difference to people's lives through closer working between agencies and signposting. It will also serve as a potential for identifying needs information for the Supporting People team and as a referral base for the proposed generic floating support service.

Outcomes for service users

- 136** Strengths balance weaknesses in this area. There is evidence that Supporting People is making a difference to the lives of service users in Havering through the quality of support provided and support planning. Havering also has clear plans in place to improve service provision to meet the needs of a wider client group. However, the lack of comprehensive needs analysis prevents the programme from ensuring that the needs of the range of client groups are being met, and the programme lacks systematic outcome measuring for service users and shared outcomes with partners, in order to demonstrate consistent outcomes.
- 137** There has been an improved focus on the provision and quality of housing-related support. The service reviews provided a framework to ensure that providers were clear on the difference between housing-related and care support. During our reality checks to a number of schemes we found that support provision was more of an enabling model with an approach to developing the opportunities for 'moving on'. The improvement in this type of support was particularly evident in two schemes for people with learning disabilities and mental health issues. This assists service users to develop and improve independent living.

- 138** The use of support planning has improved among providers. Supporting People have used the service reviews, providers forum and general sharing of information to raise the profile and quality of support planning. Providers were positive about their ability to develop their approach to support planning. The support plans that we saw demonstrated a clear approach to support planning through the inclusion of the service users and to maintain and develop independent living.
- 139** There have been a number of improved or new services introduced in the last year that include:
- the introduction of an home improvement agency in Havering in September 2005, to assist older people access funds and assistance in maintaining their homes. To date this has had 85 referrals in Havering: 32 have applied for improvement grants; 10 have applied for disabled facility grants; and 43 have been referred to other specialist agencies;
 - match funding of 50 per cent by Supporting People for the housing strategy floating support for young people from April 2006;
 - improved support to homeless families in Council hostels following the transfer of the support service to an external provider in May 2006. This has already resulted in improved circumstances for a number of individuals that include: one moving on to private sector leasing accommodation; one accessing a training scheme; and another re-engaging with officers; and
 - the extra care scheme due to open in July 2006, following joint commissioning with adult services. This provides a more holistic approach to support provision that has involved both internal and external stakeholders.
- 140** There are further plans in place to develop floating support in Havering. Costing has been sought for generic floating support provision and a draft specification formatted (targeted to start August 2006), match funding is to be met by community learning disabilities for floating support for people with learning disabilities (targeted for 2007/08) and the development of the tender for the potential new women's' refuge will include the provision to provide floating support (targeted for 2007/08). As one of the lacking services identified in the five-year strategy floating support is a much needed service in Havering. The provision of floating support will also free up current accommodation-related support, particularly for people with mental health issues, people with learning disabilities and women escaping domestic violence.
- 141** The Council is taking a holistic approach to reviewing and planning services for older people. The strategic review of supported housing underway is in recognition of the increasing level of older people in Havering, 80 per cent who are owner occupiers and current provision not adequately meeting their needs. A paper on the findings will be submitted to Cabinet in Autumn 2006, with proposals to implement the findings in 2007/08.

- 142** The Council does not yet have a comprehensive database of needs analysis across all client groups. There are developments underway to improve and gather this information, but the lack of it has prevented the Council from ensuring that it is adequately meeting or developing services that meet the needs of the various client groups in Havering.
- 143** The Council has not developed performance outcomes for the Supporting People. It has not introduced outcome measurements for service users, neither has it introduced shared performance measurements with partners. The sub-region is currently developing outcome measurements, which Havering plan to participate in but currently the programme is restricted in systematically demonstrating outcomes to service users and shared outcomes with partners.
- 144** Case studies illustrating the benefits of the Supporting People programme in Havering are set out below.

Case study 1

Miss A and her two children entered supported housing after Miss A had experienced a number of years of domestic violence from her husband, both of a sexual and mental nature.

Due to the years of abuse Miss As confidence was at an all time low and she had feelings of worthless, guilt and ashamed of putting her children through years of hearing and seeing domestic violence. There were times when Miss A had contemplated taking her own life as she felt the world would be a better place without her.

After moving into the supported housing Miss A said that it was the first time her children had felt safe for years. Both practical and emotional support and assistance was provided to Miss A and her two children, in accessing welfare benefits, mental health support, counselling for the oldest child, GP provision and future housing options.

Over time Miss As confidence returned and she was able to take on tasks for herself. She later enrolled on a beauty course at college, which followed her lifetime dream to become a beauty therapist. Miss A was rehoused and now works part-time as a trainee beautician and considers that both she and her children now have the chance of a happier future due to Supporting People.

Case study 2

B initially moved into a group home for people with mental health issues but was unhappy there. Subsequently he moved into a scheme that provided high level support and then onto medium level support accommodation. While at the two schemes he has attended a maths course and started working, where he continues to work. He has since been rehoused into a bedsit bungalow and is a keen gardener. He has built up a good relationship with his neighbours and has a wide circle of friends. He often goes away for weekends and holidays.

Case study 3

Miss D and Mr E live in supported housing for people with learning disabilities. Miss D and Mr E are going out together and hope one day to get married and live together by themselves.

When the service was reviewed in the summer of 2005, Mr E was very unhappy because he felt trapped as he was unable to leave his home by himself easily because he suffers from epilepsy and both he and his mum were worried about how he would cope out on his own.

Since the review, the provider has been working hard with lots of residents on skills to maximise independence including travel training and cooking. Miss D is now visiting her mum on her own, who lives locally. Mr E has worked with staff at learning how to make certain that when he goes out he has his mobile phone with him and wears his medic alert bracelet so that in the event of a seizure, he can be looked after. In fact, he has had one seizure out alone and he was taken to hospital, proving that the new system works. This has reassured Mr E and he is now enjoying his new independence, no longer feeling unable to go out.

Miss D and Mr E are also enjoying learning how to do their own shopping and cook their own meals as they can see that this is something they will need to know how to do in the future. Miss D and Mr E have started going out on their own, sometimes together, to different places with the support and encouragement of the staff team.

Summary

- 145 Havering provides a 'fair' Supporting People programme. Overall, it has the strategic and operational framework in place to deliver the Supporting People programme through the CB, Supporting People team and corporate commitment provided through member and officer support, an increased corporate profile of Supporting People and resources (both through additional resources and joint working across the Council). Although weaknesses in the engagement of the PCT in the programme have only just started to improve, the CSG is not yet sufficiently developed and the Council has not yet developed local and shared performance indicators and outcome measurements for service users.
- 146 The Council has completed a robust set of service reviews that have led to significant savings and improved and re-aligned support services for service users. Beyond the service reviews the Council has not developed an approach to value for money for Supporting People. Delivery arrangements generally work well, although the Council has yet to develop needs mapping across all client groups and this has caused some delay in the commissioning of new services. However, some new services have been jointly commissioned or developed for various client groups. There is a positive relationship with providers.

- 147** There is a range of clear information available about Supporting People. However, we found a variable service in the level of knowledge provided by frontline staff. Stakeholder and service user involvement in the five-year strategy requires strengthening, and although there are examples where service users have influenced service delivery this has not yet sufficiently been developed for the programme.

What are the prospects for improvement to the service?

What is the service track record in delivering improvement?

- 148** Strengths outweigh weaknesses in this area. The Council have a corporate track record of improving and placing infrastructures in place to drive improvement. Considering the low base that Supporting People in Havering was at during the last inspection, it has made some significant progression within the last year. This includes completion of the majority of the Audit Commission's recommendations, healthy progress on the five-year strategy's annual plan, completion of the service reviews and a large level of savings. It has not developed a full range of new services within this time, but has started to work with partners (with some evidence of outcomes and more in the pipeline) and improved outcomes for service users through the service review process and dedication of the Supporting People team.
- 149** There is a corporate track record of improvement at Havering. The Audit Commission's Corporate Performance Assessment of Havering Council found its direction of travel was 'improving well' in January 2006.²⁷ It found that managerial capacity and systems had been strengthened, workforce capacity had led to being in the top 25 per cent of performers for sickness absences and the Council had a sound financial position (although there was some risk imposed by children and families care services). There had been a significant officer and member commitment to developing and embedding performance management that had resulted in a positive shift in organisational culture and wide ownership of regular performance reporting and monitoring.
- 150** The majority of the Audit Commission's recommendations from the last inspection have been carried out by the Council. Out of the 29 recommendations 8 have not been fully completed. These are in the areas of frontline signposting; scrutiny and challenge from the CSG; effective service user voice on the CSG; robust needs analysis; robust approach to ensuring that the service is delivering value for money (other than service reviews); value for money criteria and benchmarking; effective consultation methods with service users; and work with BME and relevant community groups. However, they are either under development, partially completed or detailed in further action plans.

²⁷ Annual Audit and Inspection Letter, January 2006

- 151** There has been mixed performance against the five-year strategy annual plan for 2005/06. Out of the 35 actions, 10 have been completed, 15 are progressing and 10 are inactive. Those that are inactive have been rolled over into 2006/07 and include; needs mapping and consideration of new services for people escaping domestic violence, substance misuse, offenders and travellers; the development of performance reports for a variety of audiences; the development of regular contract monitoring (and actions); the development of a commissioning and procurement strategy.
- 152** Despite being late in the commencement of a robust service review process. The Council has met the government target to complete the service reviews by March 2006. In doing so a number of services have been de-commissioned or remodelled to improve the delivery of housing-related support. The service reviews have identified a saving of £684,928. When compared to Havering's Supporting People grant of £2,430,034, this is quite a substantive amount,
- 153** There have been some new or extended services introduced in Havering in the last year, that have included:
- through cross-authority working the introduction of a home improvement agency in September 2005, with some funding from the DCLG;
 - Supporting People match funding for the floating support provision to young people in April 2006 (which was originally introduced as part of the housing strategy);
 - the extension and improvement of support services to homeless families in hostels in May 2006; and
 - the joint commissioning of an extra care service for older people with adult services. This was due to open in July 2006 and will provide 64 units, 52 of which will receive Supporting People funding.
- 154** There has been some delay in identifying new services for the remainder of the savings from the service reviews. This is due to need analysis to be comprehensively collated across the client groups, in order for a strategic decision to be made regarding new service provision. The Council is currently focusing on this and aim to make a decision by autumn 2006.
- 155** The profile of Supporting People has improved. Information is more readily available including leaflets, articles in newsletters and the website. There is an awareness amongst officers of the impact Supporting People can have various service areas that has improved joint working and members that we spoke to were aware of the programme and its aims. However, despite the Supporting People delivering information and briefings to teams our reality checks found a significant weakness in the knowledge of Supporting People at face-to-face frontline offices that may prevent potential service users from accessing relevant information about the programme.

- 156** Havering has successfully brought about changes through restructuring. The new sustainable communities' directorate has further improved communication and working across housing (where Supporting People is based) and adult services. Although there was joint working in place already (evidenced by the development of Paines Brook) this has been strengthened. The change in the line management of the Supporting People manager to the Accountable Officer has strengthened the direction of the team and the programme. All of which have been done with limited disruption, and brought additional benefits to the delivery of Supporting People.
- 157** The Supporting People team have taken an active role in the sub-regional group. Although the group is not advanced as some of its counterparts in London, Havering have accessed information and good practice through the group. This has included the costing benchmarking that was developed in May 2005 by Havering, the opportunity to attend service reviews in other authorities and the future proposals for service reviews. The Supporting People Manager has recently taken over the role of chair on the group, and the group is currently considering key pieces of work that will further assist the programme in Havering.

How does the service manage performance?

- 158** There is a mixture of strengths and weaknesses in this area. There is clear ambition and a corporate framework in place to manage performance, and this has demonstrated outcomes in the housing service. Performance of Supporting People is regularly monitored, however, there has been no development of outcome measurements or local or strategic performance indicators. Plans accurately reflect the weaknesses of the programme, however, they lack measurable targets. Learning has also been limited as the Council is not consistently learning from the better performers in Supporting People.
- 159** There is clear ambition within Havering to improve services. It has based the housing and environmental health services plan for 2006/09 on the Audit Commission's three-star rating.²⁸ This provides a clear basis for direction of travel, and the plan incorporates actions for Supporting People that cover the weaknesses identified during the inspection.
- 160** There is clearer leadership with the Council to deliver improvements and manage performance. Political stability within the Council has improved since the May 2006 election. The Council is now an authority with a Conservative majority. This is the first time that Havering has had a majority since 1982 and both officers and members welcomed this as a framework that will provide improved consistency for decision-making.

²⁸ Taken from the Audit Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) and the descriptor of an excellent three-star organisation.

- 161** The Council has now put in place robust corporate leadership and support for Supporting People. The reporting alignment of the Supporting People team provides a clear framework to monitor and deliver the programme, and the restructuring provides the corporate and strategic framework to link with other partners and resources. There have been various presentations and briefings on Supporting People, with reports taken to overview and scrutiny and the Havering strategic partnership. This has improved the profile of Supporting People with officers, members and partners.
- 162** The Supporting People team is operating in an environment that has seen Havering achieve tangible success. These include the implementation of Homes in Havering (ALMO); the reform of tenant participation and a more representative structure in place; the first caretaking review in 15 years; and sound budget management systems. This demonstrates that the Council is open to considering the best way to deliver services and will stand Supporting People in good stead for the development of future services.
- 163** There is a performance management framework in place for Supporting People, although there is area for improvement. Regular performance reports are provided to the CB that incorporates performance indicators/QAF scores, budget position and forecasts, progress on the workplan, fairer charging, new service development and relevant client group progression. Objectives in staff performance development appraisals mirror the five-year strategy and work plan. Quarterly meetings take place with the lead member for housing (the portfolio holder for Supporting People) and the heads of service (housing and adult services).
- 164** Supporting People features in the Council's performance management framework. Performance on indicators SPI 1 Supporting People funded service availability and SPI 2 Supporting People funded service utilisation are reported quarterly in the housing services performance indicators and management information (PIMI) and the corporate delivering better services performance monitoring pack . This provides an overview of the service and performance exceeded the 95 per cent targets set in 2005/06 in the first three quarters of the year.
- 165** In addition, the CB receives reports on three additional performance indicators that include throughput (SPI 4), (long term) establishing or maintaining independence (KPI1) and (short term) service users who have moved on (KPI2). Performance at April 2006 all exceeded the targets set with the averages 100, 99 and 96 per cent respectively.
- 166** However, the Council has not developed the area of performance indicators for Supporting People. There has been no development of local performance indicators, strategic indicators that are shared with other departments or partners, or outcome measurements for service users. This prevents the programme from monitoring and demonstrating the consistent benefits of the programme on strategic objectives (including those shared with partners, for example health) or more specific outcomes for service users.

- 167** Plans are not consistently SMART. As detailed in 'Delivery arrangements' the work plan does not include clear measurable outcomes, neither does the housing and environmental service plan for 2006/09. The plan includes key partners, officer responsibility and annual deadlines. However, there is no specific measurement or outcome attached to each action. Although these plans align with one another the absence of clear measurable targets will prevent the Council from demonstrating how well each action has been delivered.
- 168** The application of learning in Havering Supporting People has been limited. There is an open approach to learning and there are instances where the Supporting People team has used good practice from better performing ALAs, for example eligibility, complaints and fairer charging. However, this approach is ad-hoc and the Council is not yet consistently learning through benchmarking and comparing itself with higher performing ALAs. While it is an active member of the East London sub-regional group, many of the ALAs in this group are not high performers in the area of Supporting People and therefore it is limiting itself to learning from the best and ultimately improving services to this level.

Does the service have the capacity to improve?

- 169** Strengths outweigh weaknesses in this area. Supporting People in Havering is in a borough that is improving well, and within a directorate that provides opportunities of improved joint up working, learning and access to alternative funding streams. There are strengths in the CB, member leadership and the capacity of the Supporting People team.
- 170** As outlined in 'What is the service track record in delivering improvements?' there is corporate capacity to support the delivery of the programme. This is through the corporate systems for performance management, the leadership training programme and budget setting. The development of value for money in Supporting People could also benefit from the corporate approach. In the Corporate Performance Assessment the Council scored two out of four for its use of resources, with three²⁹ specifically for value for money.
- 171** There is recognition and commitment by the Council to support and enhance the capacity of the Supporting People programme. Through the Council's robust budget setting framework the head of service has been able to seek the additional £66,000 for the administrative grant. This involved the presentation of budget requirements with performance data, previous budget outturns and staffing data; and the additional resources have been used to employ the service user officer.
- 172** The re-alignment of the sustainable communities' directorate has increased the possibilities of considering alternative streaming funds to support the programme, that include support from housing capital (as currently being considered for the development of the women's refuge) and private sector leasing. There is Council commitment to support the programme in the future should funding be reduced by central government.

²⁹ Four being the highest.

- 173** There is capacity within the Supporting People structure to deliver the programme. The team is enthusiastic and appropriately skilled, and once the post of business support officer is appointed to it will be a fully resourced team. There is direct line management reporting by the Supporting People Manager to the Accountable Officer that enables matters to be escalated corporately if required. From July 2006 the landlord functions of the Council was transferred to an ALMO 'Homes for Havering'. This removes the day-to-day management of the service from the Accountable Officer who is the Head of Housing, and will provide some additional capacity for focusing on his strategic role of Accountable Officer and link between the CSG and CB.
- 174** The CB functions well as a governing body, although there has been some weakness in the previous engagement of the PCT. As stated in 'Governance' the role and membership of the CB has generally operated adequately, apart from the lack of engagement from the PCT. This has started to improve and the restructuring of the PCT has seen improved communication and strategic alliances developing and there is a clear view from all parties that this will continue. PCT attendance at the CB has only just started and it is too early to indicate that this will be adequately maintained. The CB has some strategic days planned for the Autumn that will incorporate all members in considering the future strategic objectives of the CB.
- 175** There is member commitment to drive forward the Supporting People programme. The lead member for housing is the chair of the CB and the lead member for adult services is the vice chair. Both take an active role in the Supporting People programme, and meet quarterly with the Group Director and heads of service to discuss items, that include Supporting People. Members recognise the small Supporting People grant that Havering receive and are committed to supporting the service through alternative means, as mentioned earlier.
- 176** Training and development is available to enhance individuals and collective working. The CB has been open to training in areas such as service reviews and plan to focus on its strategic direction through an awayday. The Supporting People team have undergone training to enhance its capabilities, including commissioning and procurement training for new services. Performance development appraisals are in place that work towards delivering the objectives of the five-year strategy as well as to identify and address training and development needs of the team.
- 177** The Council is open to considering different ways of working. This has already been evidenced by the July 2006 introduction of an ALMO for the delivery of its landlord services. In Supporting People the development of Paines Brook has been done with internal and external stakeholders, with different providers' delivery the housing support, care support and landlord function. The strategic review of older peoples' housing supported services is also being carried out holistically in order to ensure that appropriate need and services are identified. It is a strategic review on the basis that current service provision is not strategically relevant and with an aim to meet the diverse requirements of the increasing older population in Havering.

- 178** Supporting People have sufficient access to IT capacity. There have been no significant problems with the IT system and the team have been able to provide all the required information to the DCLG on time. The programme is also so small that the Contract Officer has also developed a manual system in the event of any IT failures.
- 179** Learning is open in Havering. The Supporting People is in the process of developing further initiatives as a result of its work with other authorities, as detailed in 'How does the service manage performance?'. In principle it has already agreed the service review process post-March 2006 based on the DCLG guidance to retain QAF assessments and add supplementary objectives. In addition, learning is also taking place internally, adult services is considering implementing the QAF approach as an assessment tool for care providers. This will also apply some consistency in Havering for support services, whether they be housing or care specific. In general good practice internally is shared through the corporate leadership team, which is the strategic management team meeting of all heads of services and senior managers'.

Summary

- 180** The Council has 'promising' prospects of improving the administration of the Supporting People programme. The Council and Supporting People have a positive track record, in particular Supporting People has a track record of delivering tasks, completing service reviews and introducing some new services and raising the profile of Supporting People within Havering.
- 181** There are plans in place to address the weaknesses identified during this inspection. However, they lack consistent SMART measurable outcomes. There is a performance management framework in place, although the Council has not yet developed local or shared performance indicators. Learning has not yet been sufficiently developed to consistently learn from high performers.
- 182** There is clear capacity within the leadership of the Council, financial commitment, CB and Supporting People team to deliver improvements required to the Supporting People programme in Havering.

Appendix 1 – Performance indicators

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

Table 2 Demographic information

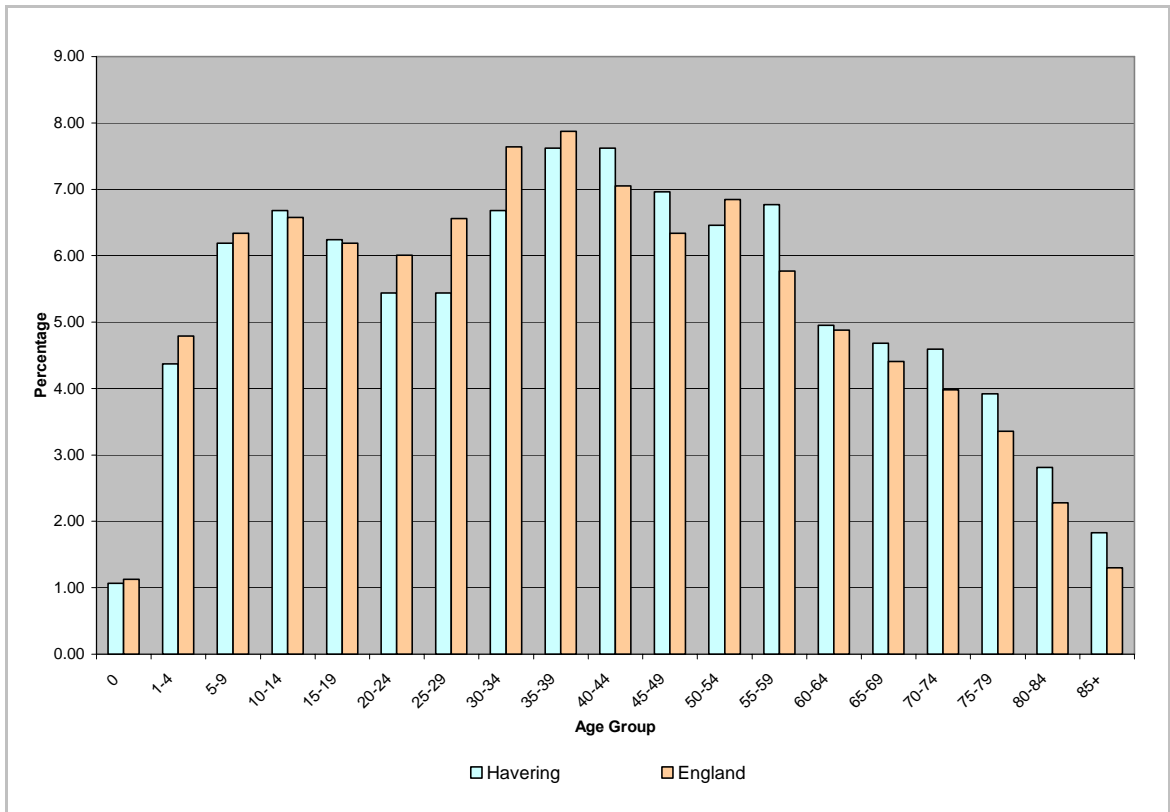
Measure	Havering	England
Population (mid-2004) ³⁰	225,000	57,851,100
Percentage of the population aged 65+ (mid-2004)	20.4	18.5
Percentage from minority ethnic groups (all groups other than white-British 2004)	4.8	10.44
Percentage unemployment (claimant count rate) ³¹	2.0	2.4
Deprivation Index (1 highest, 354 lowest) ³²	211	-

³⁰ Source: Mid-year population estimates (2004)

³¹ Source: Claimant count with rates and proportions (March 2006)

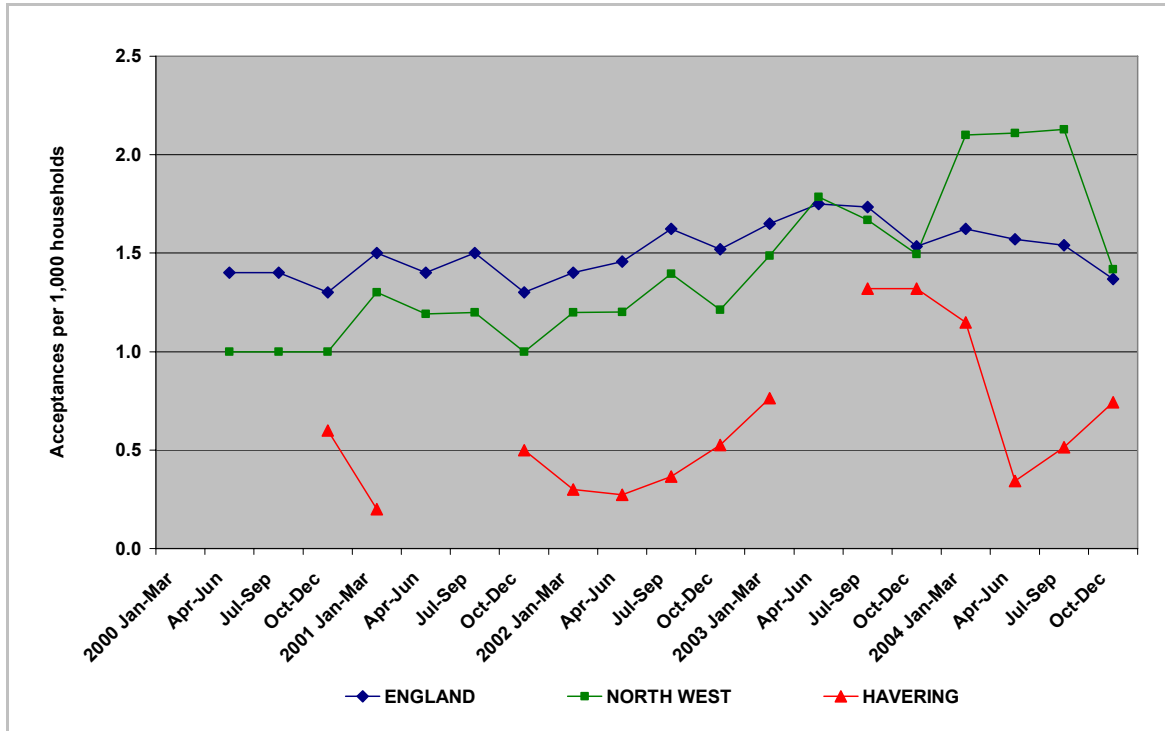
³² Source: Deprivation index 2004, average ward score for the authority

Figure 2 Percentage of the population in each age group compared with England



Source: Mid-year population estimates (2004)

Figure 3 Households accepted as homeless between 2000 and 2004 compared with the region and England (acceptances per 1,000 households)



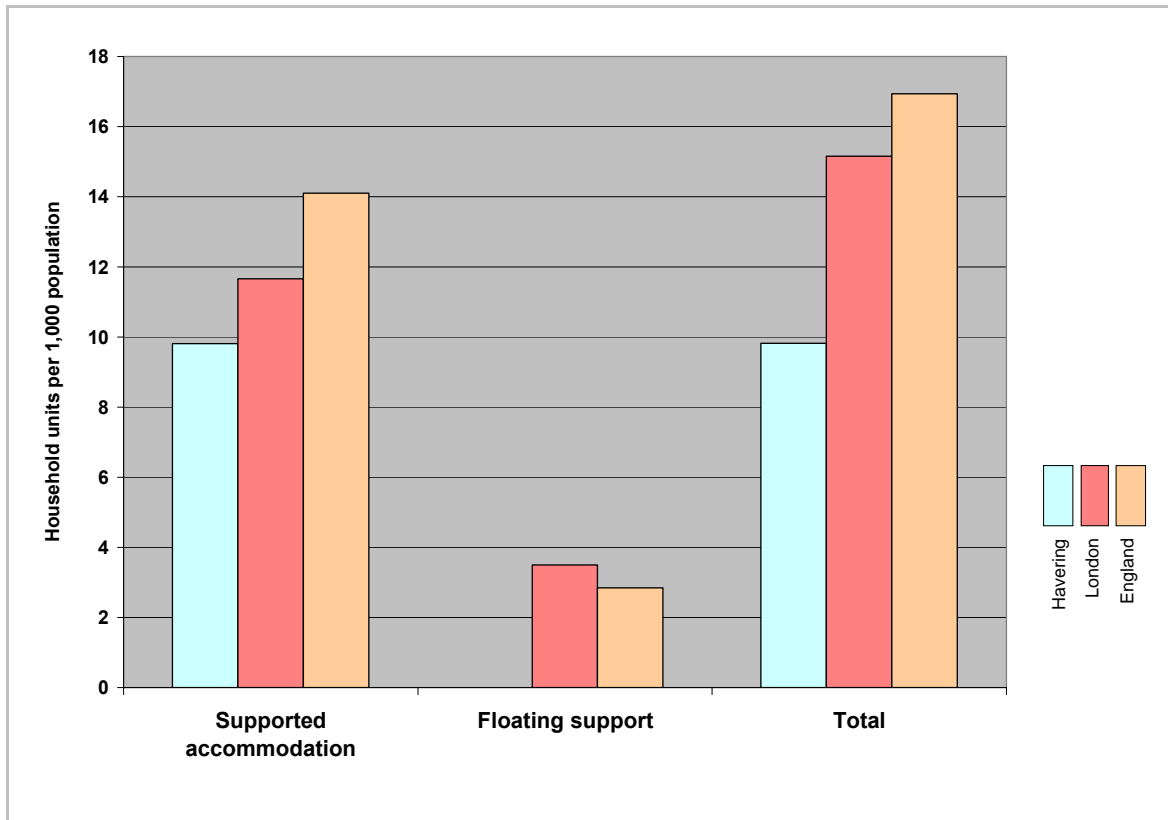
Performance information

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.

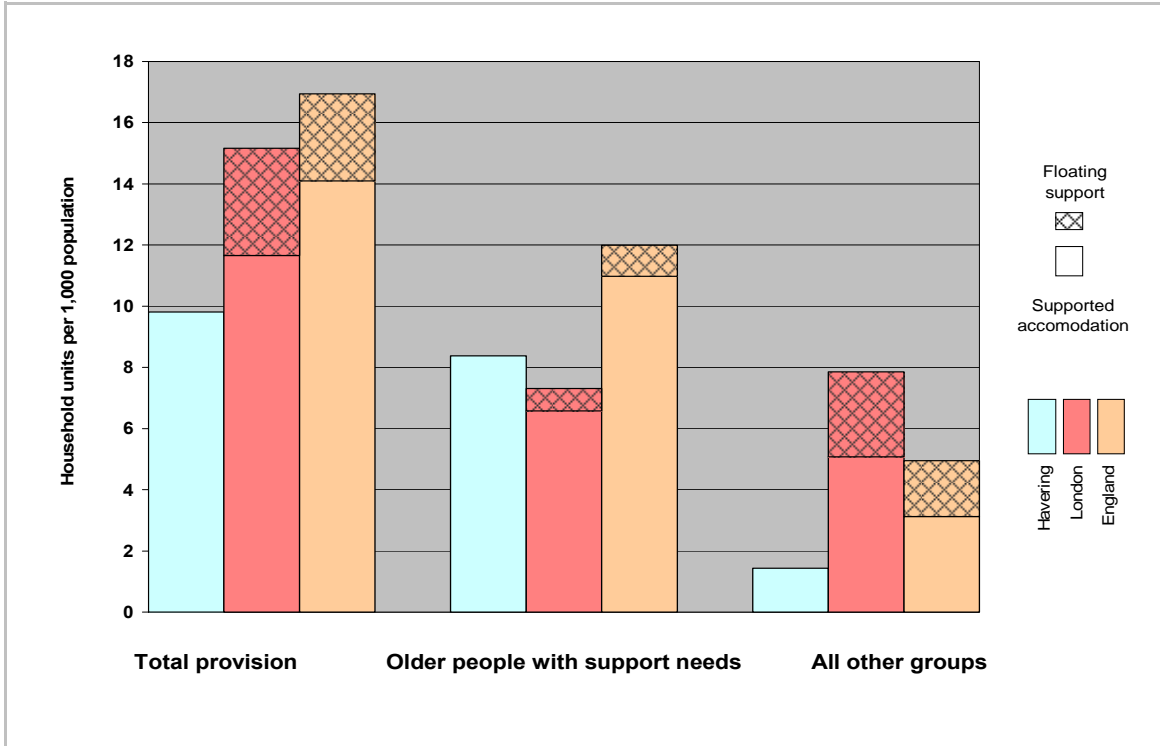
Supporting People data

Figure 4 Total service provision funded through Supporting People

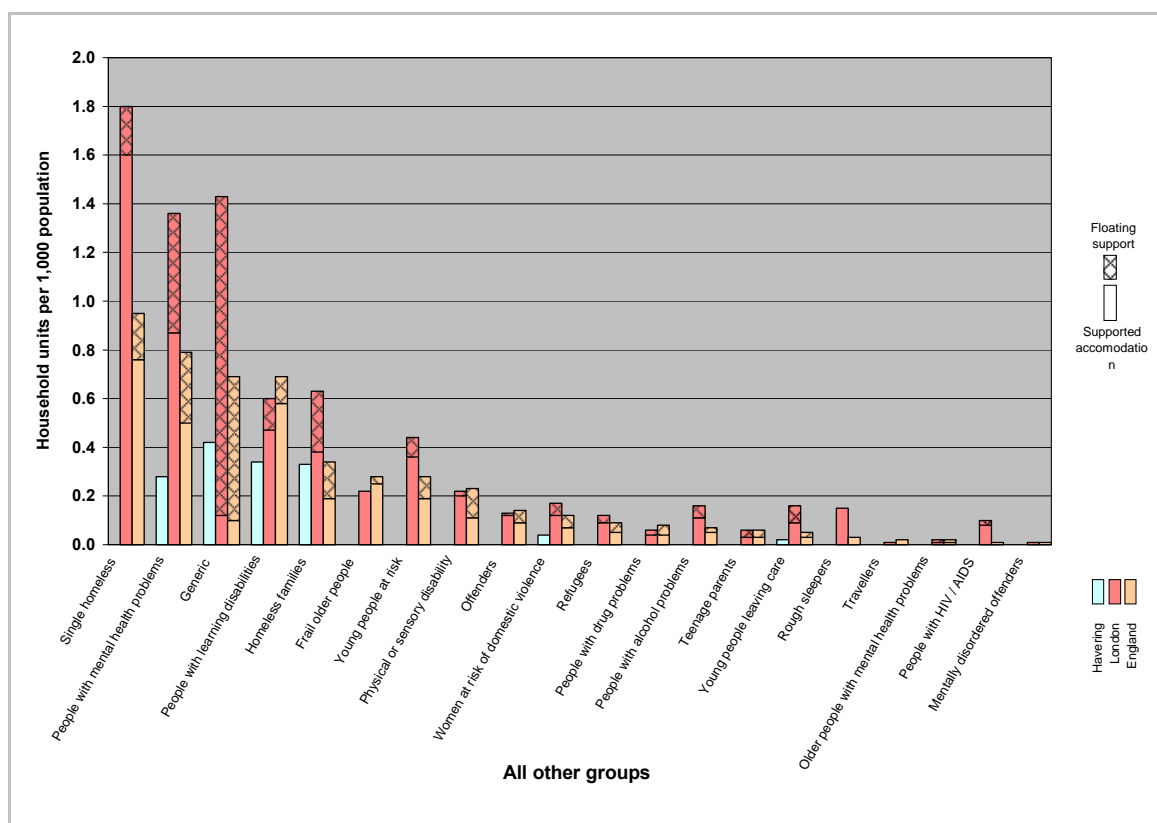


Source: Platinum cut data, DCLG November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services

Figure 5 Services for older people with support needs compared with the region and England



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

Figure 6 Services for other groups compared with the region and England

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

Table 3 Funding for Supporting People

Havering	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Final Supporting People grant	£ 2,674,644	£ 2,510,490	£ 2,460,000
Pipeline allocation	£ 211	£ 1,319	£ -
Administration grant	£ 195,818	£ 163,260	£ 130,608

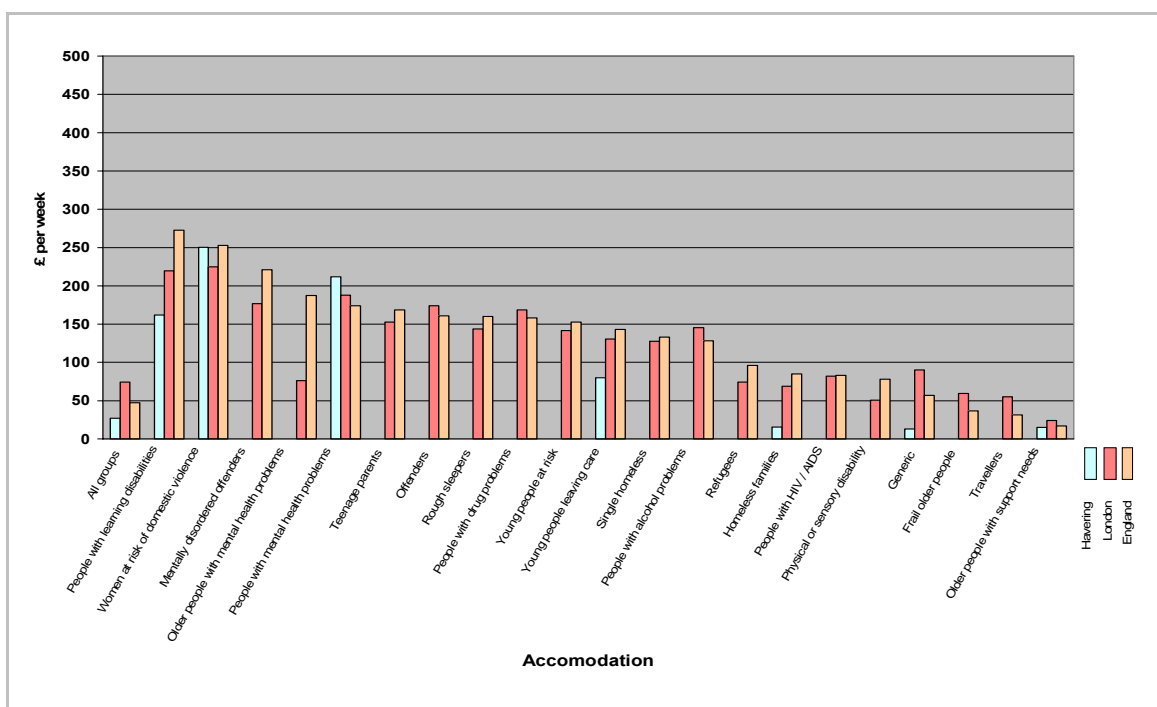
Source: Grant allocations, DCLG

Table 4 Unit costs of Supporting People services in 2003/04 (per week)

	Per head of population	Per unit	Per unit excluding community alarms	Per unit excluding community alarms and sheltered housing
Havering	£ 0.23	£ 21.68	£ 23.05	£ 104.96
Region	£ 0.97	£ 42.37	£ 48.73	£ 68.40
England	£ 0.70	£ 28.30	£ 34.71	£ 76.37

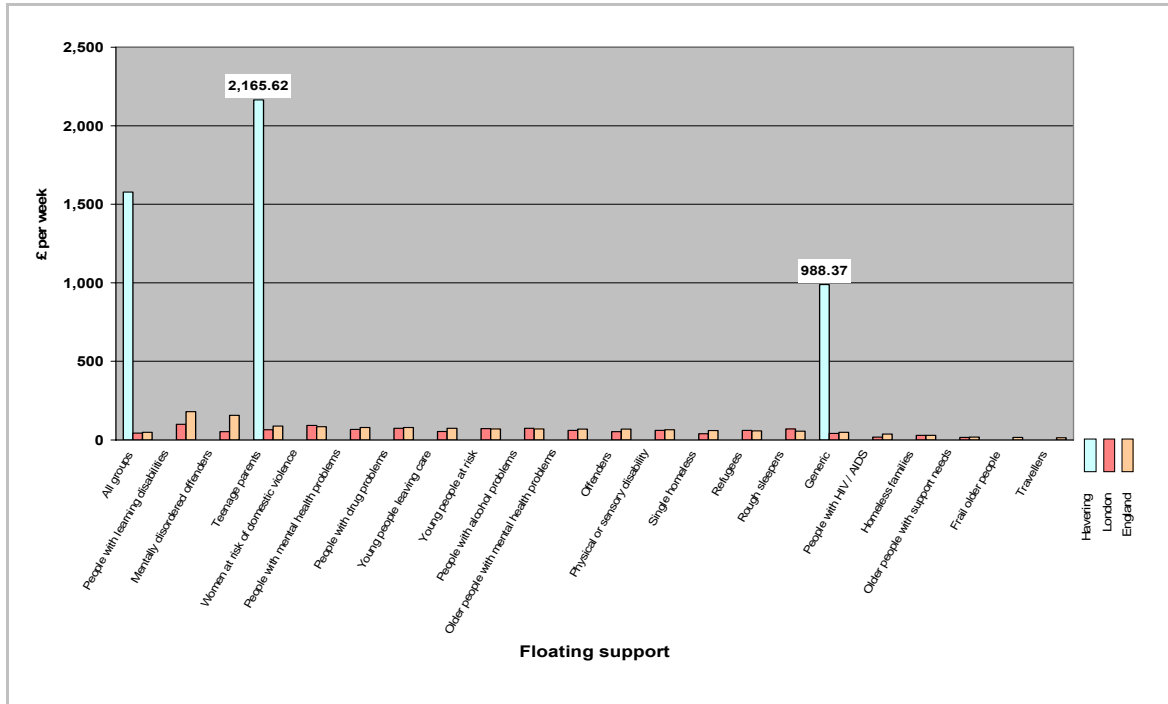
Source: Platinum cut data, DCLG November 2003. The data quoted is the only data currently available.

Figure 7 Unit costs of supported accommodation compared with the region and England (labels show costs in the highest 25 per cent)



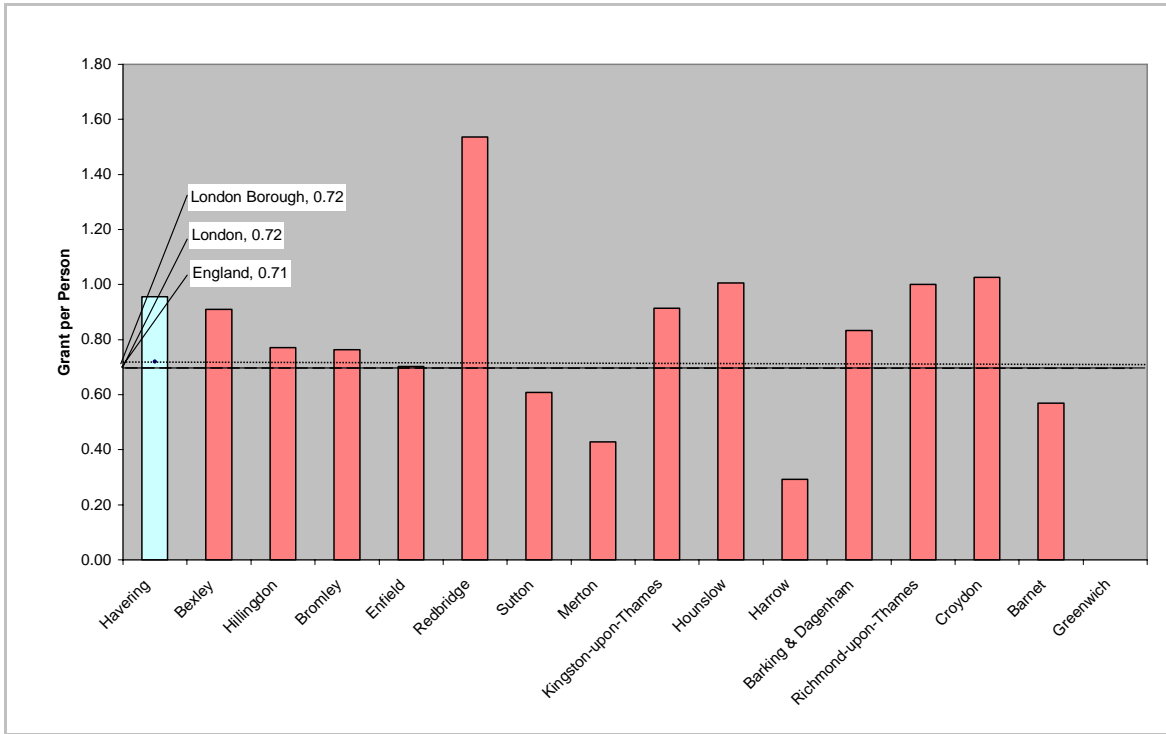
Source: Platinum cut data, DCLG November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services

Figure 8 Unit costs of floating support services compared with the region and England (labels show costs in the highest 25 per cent)



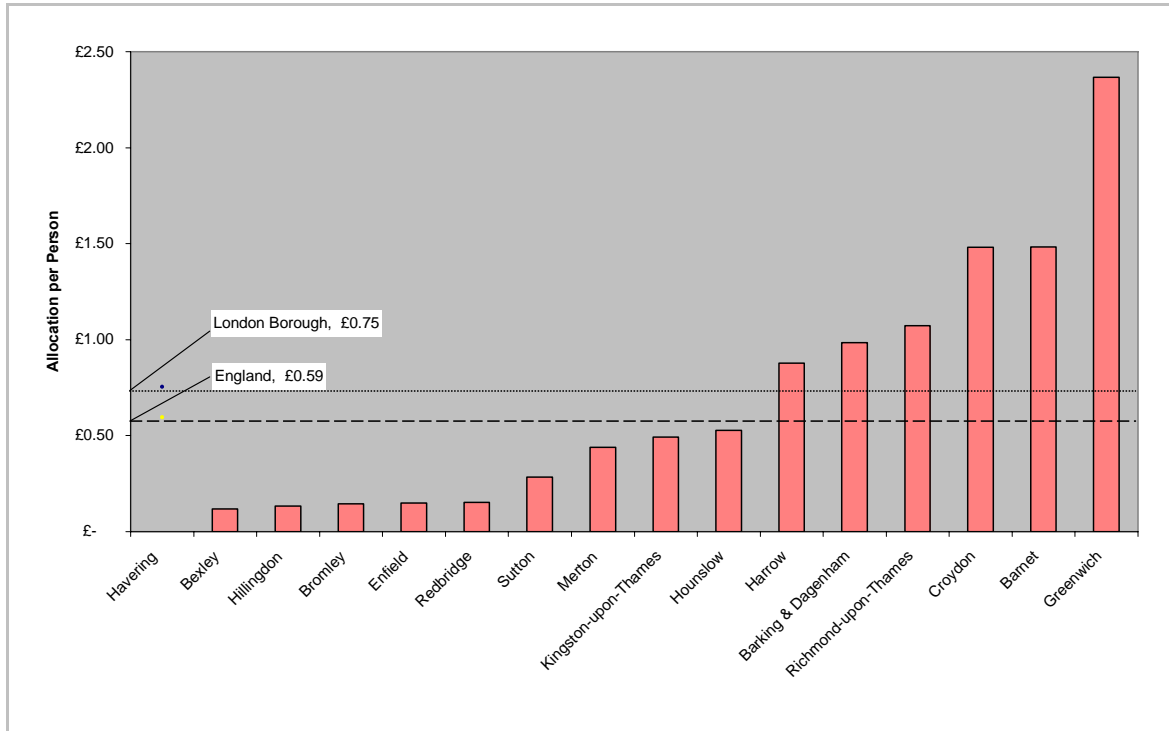
Source: Platinum cut data, DCLG November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services

Figure 9 Supporting People grant per head of population per week compared with nearest neighbours, all London boroughs and all English councils (2004/05)



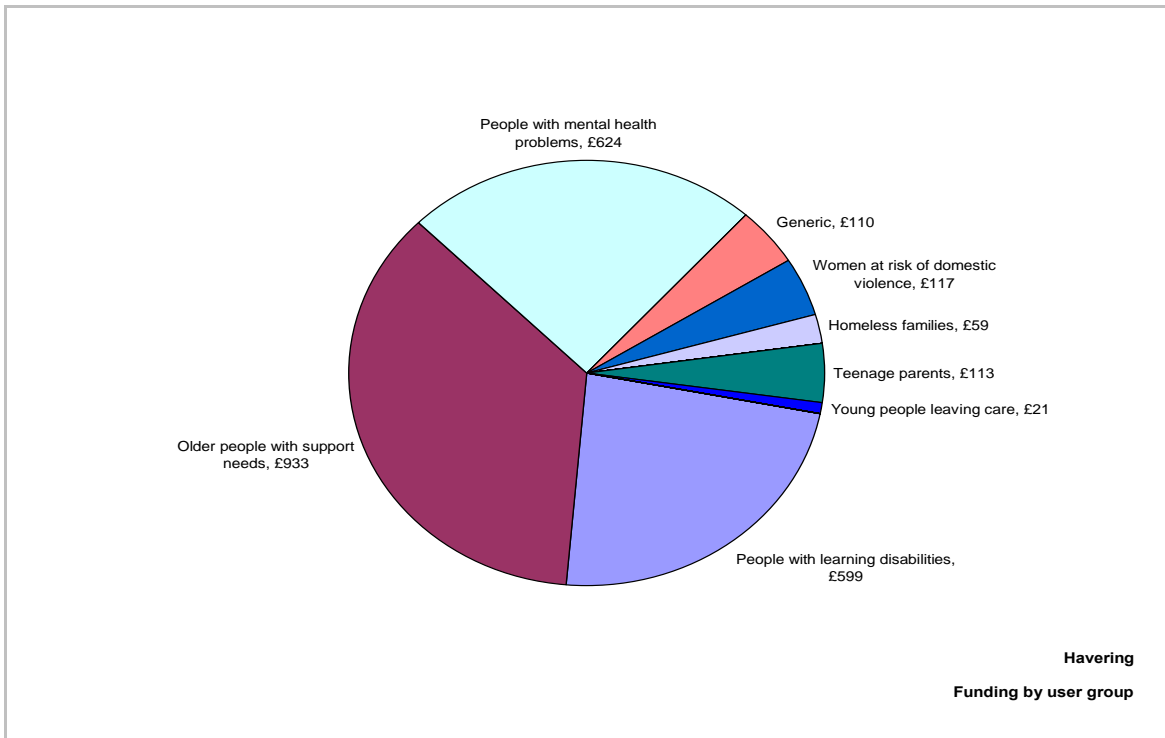
Source: A comparator group of similar councils

Figure 10 Pipeline allocation per head of population compared with nearest neighbours, all London boroughs and all English councils



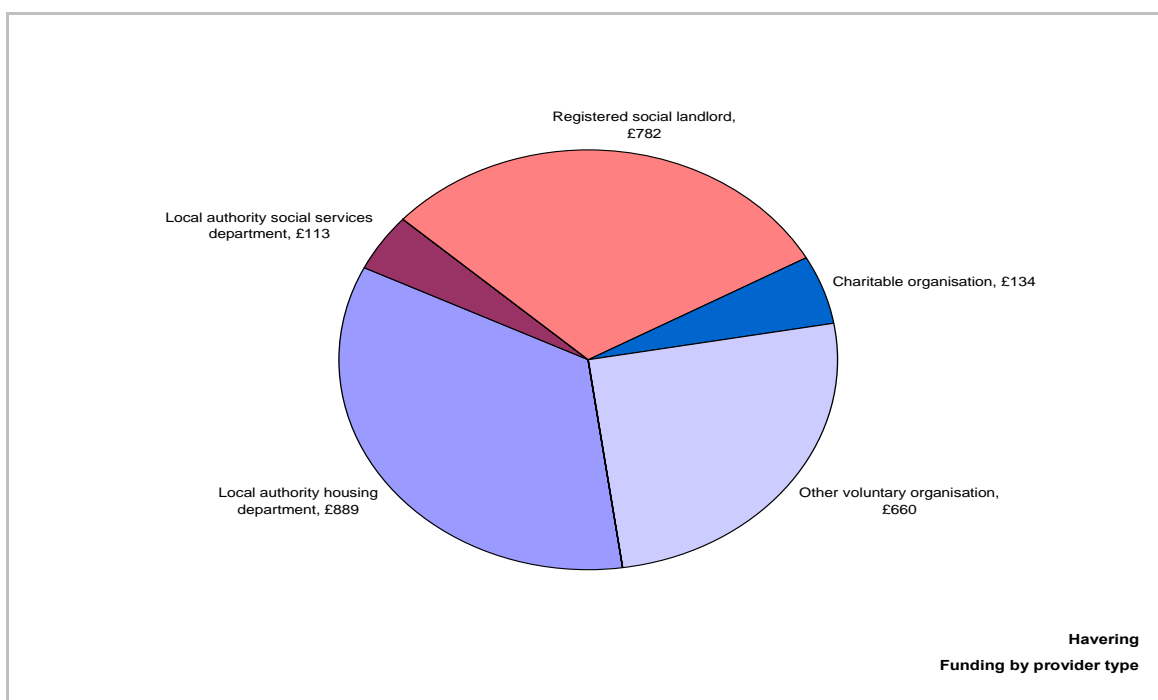
Source: A comparator of similar councils

Figure 11 Share of spending between user groups (£000s)



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

Figure 12 Share of spending between types of provider (£000s)



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

Table 5 Social services star ratings - November 2004

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

Social Services performance indicators

Performance Assessment Framework indicators 2003/04 and 2004/05

- 2 The table below shows how the Council's Social Services performed on indicators relevant to Supporting People.

Table 6

Havering	2003/04	2004/05
Significantly above average (●●●●)	Emergency psychiatric re-admissions (A6)	Not reported.
	Adults with mental health problems helped to live at home (C31)	Unchanged.
	Employment, education and training for care leavers (A4)	No comparison due to change in definition.
	Percentage of items of equipment and adaptations delivered within seven working days (D54)	Unchanged.
Above average (●●●)	Admissions of older people to residential/nursing care (C26)	Improved - to significantly above average.
Average (●●)	Admissions of supported residents aged 18 to 64 to residential/nursing care (C27)	Improved - to above average.
	Adults with physical disabilities helped to live at home (C29)	Declined - to below average.
	Adults with learning disabilities helped to live at home (C30)	Unchanged.
	Delayed transfers of care (D41)	Not reported.

Havering	2003/04	2004/05
Below average (••)	Percentage change on previous year in total emergency admissions to hospital (A5)	Not reported.
	Adults and older clients receiving a review as a percentage of those receiving a service (D40)	Unchanged.
	Adults and older people receiving a statement of their needs and how they will be met (D39)	Improved – to average.
	Older people helped to live at home (C32)	Improved - to average.
	Physically disabled and sensory impaired users who said that they can contact Social Services easily (D58)	Not reported.
Significantly below average (•)	Adults and older people receiving direct payments at 31 March per 100,000 population aged 18 or over (C51)	Unchanged.
	Physically disabled and sensory impaired users who said that their opinions and preferences were always taken into account (D57)	Not reported.

Best value performance indicators

Performance on relevant indicators in 2003/04 and 2004/05 compared with London borough councils

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

Table 7

Havering	2003/04	2004/05
Within the best 25 per cent	Length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation (BV183a)	Unchanged.
	Council homes which did not meet the decent homes standard (BV184a)	Unchanged.
Average	The level of the equality standard for local government to which the authority conforms (BV2)	Unchanged.
	Energy efficiency of local authority owned dwellings (BV63)	Improved – to within the best 25 per cent.
	Length of stay in hostel accommodation (BV183b)	Unchanged.
Within the worst 25 per cent	Average time for processing new housing benefit claims (BV78a)	Improved – to within the best 25 per cent.
	Domestic violence refuge places (BV176)	Unchanged.

Appendix 2 – Documents reviewed

- 1 Before going on-site and during our visit, we reviewed various documents that were provided for us. These included:
 - area and council profile;
 - community strategy;
 - corporate plan;
 - self-assessment by the authority;
 - Supporting People five-year strategy 2005/10;
 - minutes of and reports submitted to the commissioning body, core strategy group and providers forum;
 - reports to Cabinet;
 - Supporting People work plan;
 - service review reports;
 - financial reports and DCLG data;
 - service user leaflets and newsletters; and
 - range of strategies.

Appendix 3 – 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:
 - interviews with key personnel, including commissioning body and core strategy group representatives, Supporting People team, senior managers, partner organisations, providers and leading councillors;
 - visits to eight services funded by the Supporting People grant;
 - questionnaire to service providers funded by the Supporting People grant in Havering;
 - mystery shopping phone calls and visits;
 - focus groups with a range of providers; and
 - review of files.

Appendix 4 – Positive practice

*We found examples of positive practice ‘The Commission will identify and promote good practice. Every inspection will look for examples of good practice and innovation, and for creative ways to overcome barriers and resistance to change or make better use of resources.’
(Seeing is Believing)*

Service user involvement in service reviews

- 1 Tailored information to enhance service user involvement in the service review process, through:
 - the use of pictorial questionnaires for people with learning disabilities in the validation visits; and
 - tailored service review reports to meet the needs of specific client groups that reflect their interests and areas of priority.