

Supporting People Inspection Report

March 2007



Supporting People Report

Bournemouth Borough Council

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Supporting People Inspections

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

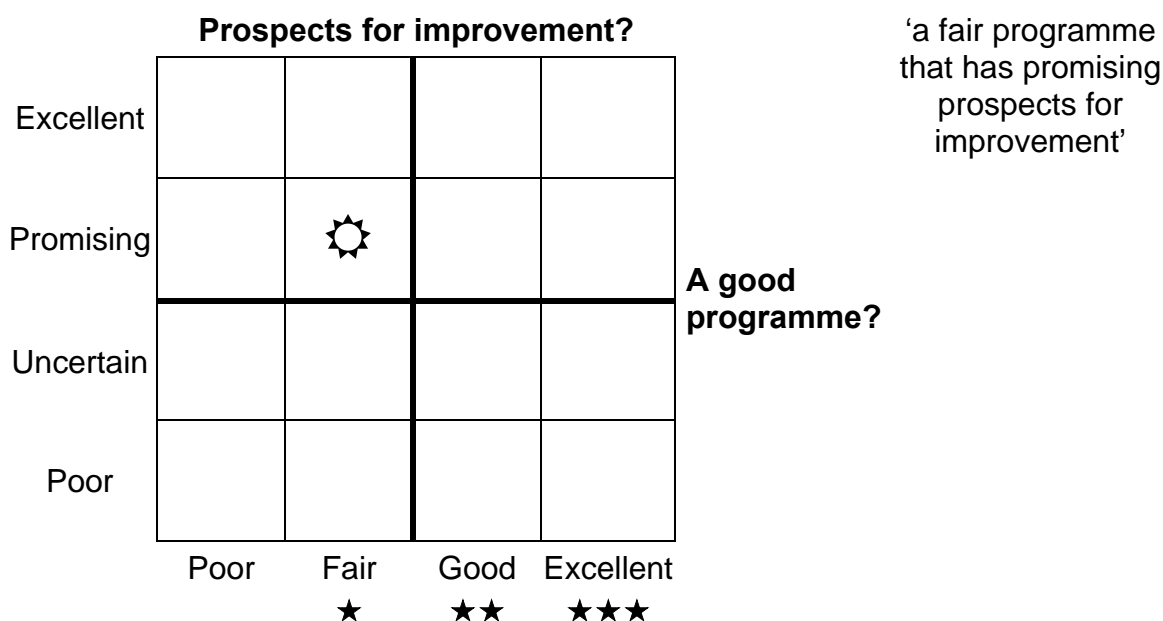
Summary

- 1 Bournemouth Borough Council is providing a fair Supporting People programme that has 'promising' prospects for improvement.
- 2 Governance and delivery arrangements are effective. The team is stable, communicates effectively with partners, and supports providers. Reasonable progress has been made issuing steady state contracts and all service reviews were completed. There are positive outcomes for service users and the quality of services is improving. Service user involvement is well embedded in to the programme and service users are shaping the delivery of the programme and influencing the future direction of the service.
- 3 There are areas of weakness in the programme's delivery. The Commissioning Body has not yet fully developed its strategic leadership role and developed a clear longer-term vision for the programme. Access arrangements are mixed and progress on equality and diversity is slow. Planning and joint commissioning is weak. Value for money is improving but procurement is weak.
- 4 There have been improvements in performance at a corporate level, in some important service such as homelessness and in some key performance indicators. Value for money is also improving though from a low baseline. The Supporting People team is now well established and benefiting from improved managerial and political leadership and governance. Corporate leadership is strong and playing a role in improving the service. This gives greater confidence that improvements will be delivered. Partnership working is enhancing capacity and the programme is financially strong. The Council demonstrates self-awareness and is learning from organisations that are performing well but is failing to learn systematically from complaints.
- 5 However, there are a number of barriers to improvement. The five-year strategy lacks a clear longer-term vision for the service and there are some weaknesses in key future plans. Performance management of the programme's improvement plan and its staff are weak and there has been some slippage on improvement plan targets. Improvements in internal capacity are mixed and joint commissioning arrangements have not yet been fully developed. The track record of improving key corporate and social care indicators is mixed and progress on equalities and diversity has also been slow.

Scoring the Supporting People programme

- 6 We have assessed Bournemouth Borough Council as providing a ‘fair’, one-star programme that has promising prospects for improvement. Our judgements are based on the evidence obtained during the inspection and are outlined below.

Figure 1 Scoring chart²



Source: Audit Commission

- 7 We found the programme to be fair because it has a range of strengths including:
- there are positive outcomes for service users that are directly attributable to the Supporting People programme and the quality of services is improving;
 - service user involvement is well embedded in to the programme and service users are shaping the delivery of the programme and influencing the future direction of the service;
 - reasonable progress has been made issuing steady state contracts and all service reviews were completed; poor services have been challenged and where appropriately decommissioned;

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

- governance arrangements are strong and improving and delivery arrangements are effective;
 - the team is stable, communicates effectively with partners, and supports providers; and
 - there is political support for the delivery of the programme.
- 8 However, there are some areas, which require improvement. These include:
- the Commissioning Body has not yet fully developed its strategic leadership role and developed a clear longer-term vision for the programme;
 - there are some weaknesses in the five-year (Commissioning) Strategy and its links with other key strategies, value for money is improving but is under developed;
 - procurement is weak and the management of value for money lacks a focus on outcomes;
 - planning and joint commissioning is weak; and
 - access arrangements are mixed and progress on equality and diversity is slow.
- 9 On balance, the programme has promising prospects for improvement because:
- there have been improvements in some important services such as homelessness and in some key performance indicators;
 - the Supporting People team is now well established and benefiting from improved managerial and political leadership and governance;
 - corporate leadership is strong and playing a role in improving the service. This gives greater confidence that improvements will be delivered;
 - partnership working is enhancing capacity and the programme is financially strong; and
 - the Council demonstrates self-awareness and is learning from organisations that are performing well.
- 10 However, there are some barriers to improvement. These include:
- progress on equalities and diversity has also been slow;
 - joint commissioning arrangements remain underdeveloped;
 - performance management of the programme and its staff are weak and there has been some slippage on improvement plan targets; and
 - the five-year strategy lacks a clear longer-term vision for the service and there are some weaknesses in key future plans.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation

R1 Improve access to Supporting People services by ensuring that:

- information about Supporting People services is easily available at all Council access points, and that front line staff are able to direct potential users to the services that they need;*
- access arrangements recognise the needs of all service users particularly those visiting the Town Hall; and*
- that complaints are responded to within agreed timescales and that regular learning reviews of the complaints process are reported on.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- better 'fit' between the needs of local people and the service provided;
- people requiring housing-related support, carers, advocates and members of the public can easily find out about how to obtain Supporting People services;
- people can easily access a member of the Supporting Housing Team;
- the Supporting People programme is learning from complaints received and using this learning to deliver improvement; and
- vulnerable people experiencing problems can complain and that the process is well managed.

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

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

Recommendation

R2 Develop a move-on strategy, which addresses:

- *making best use of all available accommodation for people in supported housing who need move-on;*
- *move-on arrangements which where required include some form of support; and*
- *an agreed approach to managing existing tenants of supported housing who although independent are reluctant to move-on.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- better use of supported housing;
- availability of suitable accommodation for vulnerable people with supported housing needs; and
- promoting independence for those people who have reached a stage where they are able to leave higher levels of supported housing provision.

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

Recommendation

R3 Define a long-term vision and overarching strategy for the service with clear and challenging targets based on a robust understanding of the needs and requirements of service user needs, by:

- *requiring all key partners, such as health and probation to produce regular updates on the housing-related support needs of their vulnerable client groups;*
- *systematically monitoring information from service providers and service users on needs; and*
- *reviewing and reporting on needs analysis at least bi-annually to the Core Strategy Group and the Commissioning Body.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- the Commissioning Body and Core Strategy Group will be better informed to provide enhanced leadership;
- the Council and its partners will have a better informed and planned programme for the delivery of Supporting People services that meet the needs of a wider range of people;
- improved standards of service delivery and enhanced responsiveness to emerging issues; and
- greater focus on priority areas based on up-to-date housing support needs and improved links with partners priorities.

The implementation of this recommendation will have high impact with medium costs. This should be implemented from April 2007 onwards resulting in a revised strategy to cover from April 2008 onwards.

Recommendations

R4 Improve performance management of the programme by:

- *ensuring all future plans are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) and link to related plans both internally and externally;*
- *report to the Commissioning Body on all areas of key performance on a regular basis; and*
- *continue to develop an outcome-based approach to measuring success, including outcomes identified by service users.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- plans will be deliverable;
- poor performance will be easily identified and remedial action can be taken quickly;
- performance information is actively used in the decision-making process; and
- improved links to wider objectives and with partners priorities and plans.

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

Recommendations

R5 Improve the Service's approach to value for money by:

- *developing a comprehensive understanding of how its costs and successful outcomes of service compare;*
- *routinely reviewing service cost alongside service performance; and*
- *implementing effective procurement practice across the programme.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- high levels of understanding and awareness of value for money issues across the organisation;
- improved value for money and achievement of efficiency gains; and
- better outcomes for residents.

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

Recommendations

R6 Strengthen the corporate approach to diversity by:

- *ensure that all staff receive regular and updated diversity training which is monitored and recorded;*
- *encourage all councillors to attend diversity training which is regularly updated;*
- *complete diversity and equality impact assessments in the establishment of all plans and strategies;*
- *ensuring that data gathering and analysis on equality and diversity is part of performance monitoring and needs analysis*
- *make arrangements to include translation straplines on all published information to indicate their availability in other languages and formats; and*
- *mainstreaming equality and diversity work in to the day-to-day delivery of the programme.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- demonstration of community leadership and the ability to demonstrate that services are being provided equitably, sensitively and without discrimination;
- a better understanding of the barriers which may prevent some groups from accessing services;
- compliance with legislation and good practice; and
- development of Supporting People services that meet the needs of all sectors of the community.

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

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

Dates of inspection: 4 to 8 December 2006

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Report

Context

The locality

- 13 Bournemouth Borough Council is a unitary council in the county of Dorset in the south-west of England.
- 14 The population of Bournemouth is 164,000 (2002 mid-year estimate) and it continues to grow. Between 1991 and 2001, the population of the district increased by just over 7 per cent, compared with a national average increase of nearly 6 per cent. The population is projected to grow by 9.5 per cent between 1996 and 2011. Population density is high, with 24 per cent of the 'greater Dorset' population living in two percent of its area.
- 15 The proportion of older people is higher than the national average (21 per cent 65 or over, compared with a national average of 16 per cent), although this gap is closing. The proportion of people from ethnic groups other than 'white British' is 7.5 per cent (compared with 4.5 per cent for the South West, and 13 per cent for England), with significant numbers of white-other, white-Irish and South East Asian residents.
- 16 Bournemouth is ranked 95th out of 354 English councils in terms of the DCLG's indices of deprivation, where one is the most deprived, although there are pockets of deprivation within this. Employment is varied, with many employed in the tourism and education sectors but with a range of other employment types and relatively low levels of unemployment - just under 2 per cent compared with the national average of 2.5 per cent. However, gross average weekly pay is low at £350 compared with the national average of £431.

The Council

- 17 The Council has 54 councillors. The Liberal Democrat party gained overall political control from a long-standing Conservative administration in May 2003. The current position following by-elections and councillors moving to another political group is, Liberal Democrat 30, Conservative 19, Labour 3 and 2 Independent councillors. The cabinet system of governance has been in place since 2002. The cabinet of eight councillors is overseen by a scrutiny and review panel.

18 The Council has improved its performance in recent years.

- In 2002, the Audit Commission assessed corporate performance assessment score as 'fair'. In 2005 the updated CPA assessment was rated as an above acceptable performance score of three.
- The Joint Area Review (JAR) in 2005 assessed the Council as providing with its partners good services for children, and establishing an integrated children's service.
- The overall direction of travel in 2005 was considered to be 'improving adequately'.

The Council's Use of Resources Assessment in 2005 highlighted some areas for improvement, which included value for money with specific concerns around procurement performance and project management.

- 19 In support of the Community Strategy the Council has agreed nine service improvement priorities, a number of which support the Supporting People programme. They include; affordable housing, children's services, safer communities and customer first.
- 20 The Council employs approximately 4,670 full-time staff. In 2006/07 the Council's overall budget is just over £179 million. Current projections indicate that the Council faces substantial financial pressures, with the need for year-on-year budget savings. The medium-term financial plan (MTFP) identifies a gap of £1.6 million in 2006/07, increasing to £3 million in 2007/08 if no corrective action is taken.
- 21 In 2005 the Council was made South West regional champion for homelessness. This is an area that is important for the Council as the area attracts high numbers of people who are homeless and in housing need.

The Supporting People programme

- 22 The Council acts as the administering local authority (ALA) for the development and delivery of the Supporting People programme in their area. The Service is located within the Adult and Community Support directorate. The Supporting People team consists of a manager supported by a team of six staff. The key strategic partners to the programme are health and criminal justice services; this is supported by a range of partnerships across care services.
- 23 The Supporting People programme is designed to meet the housing-related support needs of vulnerable people including the homeless, people with physical/sensory impairments, older people with support needs, people with a learning difficulty, people with poor mental health, those with substance abuse problems, refugees, travellers and offenders.

- 24 The current Supporting People programme at Bournemouth includes 131 contracts with providers providing services for approximately 3,000 vulnerable people. The total amount of Supporting People grant available to the Council in 2006/07 is just under £11.5 million. In addition, the Council receives approximately £208,000 Supporting People administration grant to fulfil its role as the administering authority. The programme has a grant under-spend of £2.1 million. The Council's Supporting People grant is the highest in the Dorset sub-region, with a range of complex services that are used by adjoining authorities.
- 25 The highest cost Supporting People service at the time of our inspection is £686 per person per week, for an accommodation-based service for people with a learning disability. The lowest cost service is £1.24 per week for a community alarm service within an accommodation-based (sheltered housing) service for older people.
- 26 The five-year Supporting People (known as the Commissioning) strategy shows that there are gaps in provision for the following groups of people:
- older people;
 - teenage parents;
 - young people;
 - physical disability;
 - offenders;
 - learning disability;
 - homeless families; and
 - a particular need for floating support and move-on accommodation.
- 27 Bournemouth Borough Council was inspected in the fourth year of the Supporting People programme. The report therefore reflects the current context for the Council as it continues to deliver the programme and focuses on determining the effectiveness of current service delivery, value for money presented by the contracted services and the outcomes for vulnerable people.

How good is the Supporting People programme?

What has the programme aimed to achieve?

28 The Bournemouth Supporting People vision is

'working together to improve peoples quality of life and support those people who are most in need, by helping them to help themselves to be as independent as possible.'

29 The aim of the Bournemouth Supporting People team is

'to add value to the quality of the housing related support services provided for vulnerable people in Bournemouth by engaging and proactively consulting with service users, carers, providers and stakeholders as part of the robust reviews of inherited services'.

30 The Supporting People (known as the Commissioning) strategy describes a range of strategic objectives for the programme which the Council is working to deliver up to 2010. These include:

- analysis of need and provision of services for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups;
- cross authority assessment of need and develop services for travellers and people with HIV and/or AIDS;
- ensure services are in line with the Council's strategies;
- contribute to key strategies across services including the commissioning strategies currently being developed by social services;
- work with key partners to help deliver other local plans and strategies;
- strengthen the working relationship between commissioners and foster joint commissioning; and
- effectively monitor and evaluate services – using benchmarking, user surveys and other relevant tools.

31 The Supporting People programme links to the key corporate aims set out in the Corporate Plan 2006/07, particularly the aims relating to adult social care and health. There are also links to the local strategic partnership as set out in the Community plan 2004 (currently undergoing review and due to be re launched April 2007). The Supporting People programme is listed as a key partner contributing to the partnership's aims which include, caring for people, serving children and young people well, involving people and local communities. Work is underway on developing the Local Area Agreement and Supporting People is part of this process, including the development of key local indicators for the programme around maximising opportunities for independent living.

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

32 The assessment was based on the following key issues:

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

33 There are a number of challenges facing the Supporting People programme in Bournemouth. The locality is the South West's second largest principle urban area and generally, the local community is becoming more diverse. There is a history of providing services for people with mental health needs and the area is attractive to transient socially excluded groups such as rough sleepers, offenders, single homeless and people with substance misuse problems. There is also a large student population. Over 33 per cent of all households comprise of single people. Approximately 14 per cent of households have one or more members with special needs - of these half (4,873 households) are physically disabled and a quarter are frail elderly.

Governance and partnerships

34 This is an area where there is a balance of strengths and weaknesses. Governance arrangements are strong and improving. The Commissioning Body and Core Strategy Group are well connected and representatives from probation and the PCT are now engaged. Service users and providers are both well represented and have an opportunity to influence the Supporting People Programme. There is political support for the delivery of the Supporting People Programme. However, the Commissioning Body has not yet fully developed its strategic leadership role and developed a clear longer-term vision for the programme.

- 35 The DCLG has set out the following structural arrangements for the governance, development and delivery of the Supporting People programme.
- Accountable Officer and the Supporting People team: drive the whole process.
 - Inclusive forum: consults with service providers and service users.
 - Core Strategy Group: proposes strategic direction, service review procedures and timetables and work needed to secure the effective and efficient delivery and development of the programme.
 - Commissioning Body: agrees strategic direction, compliance with grant conditions, outcomes of service reviews and monitors the delivery and development of the programme.
 - Councillors: approve key decisions of the Commissioning Body.
 - Supporting People team: delivers the local programme.

These are present in the Bournemouth Supporting People programme.

- 36 The Council now has a clear understanding of its role as the administering authority for the Supporting People Programme and has created a better understanding of what the programme is delivering and how it operates. Key councillors and officers are engaged and knowledgeable about the programme. Councillors have attended some meetings of the Core Strategy Group and visited selected schemes as part of the service review process. Supporting People performance reports are seen by the relevant scrutiny panel. For councillors who do not have a direct involvement with the Supporting People programme the team produce a regular newsletter that keeps councillors informed with up-to-date information. This approach is helping to raise the programme's profile and ensure political support across the Council.
- 37 The Council has invested additional resources to support the Administration Grant that funds the management arrangements for the programme's delivery. The following additional funds were agreed; £106,000 in 2004/05, £130,000 in 2005/06 and £140,000 in 2006/07. This approach is helping to ensure that there are sufficient resources available to manage the programme effectively.
- 38 Governance arrangements within the Commissioning Body are established. The membership of the Commissioning Body complies with national guidance, with an appropriate mix of representatives. The Council has been active over the past year to establish stronger engagement between the Commissioning Body and health and probation partners. This approach has been effective and more recently meetings have been well attended by all representatives. Without full and consistent engagement by strategic partners, the full potential of the programme to maximise independent living for vulnerable people can not be realised.

- 39 The Commissioning Body has demonstrated leadership and an ability to take tough decisions. For example, they have decommissioned services where there has been provider failure and developed new services including some client groups that are not always popular with local communities. The Commissioning Body has overseen the development of new strategies and completion of service reviews within national guidelines. The group has agreed and signed a Memorandum of Understanding which ensures that the Commissioning Body can operate within agreed terms and appropriately. These outcomes demonstrate that in this area the group has worked well to deliver key targets and safeguard service users.
- 40 Service user and provider involvement are well embedded in governance arrangements. Both groups are represented on the Core Strategy Group and there is also a well attended provider forum. In addition, the Supporting People programme is making good use of service user forums and networks that are operating across the Council these. Representation of groups at the Core Strategy Group covers a wide range of services, with the exception of services for people with visual impairment and physical disability. This has enabled service users and providers to have a direct input in the service reviews. Arrangements are also in place for their involvement in forthcoming sector reviews (which are discussed later in the report).
- 41 The role of the voluntary sector is recognised within the programme and in the membership of the Core Strategy Group. Contracts are held with a number of voluntary organisations and more are planned. The Bournemouth Forum (learning disability) and Disability Wessex are undertaking consultation with service users for the Council's sector review. This approach is broadening the consultation base of the programme at a strategic level.
- 42 The Core Strategy Group is performing a strong role in the delivery of the Supporting People Programme. Meetings are held every two months and are well attended. Members of the group have been involved in performance monitoring and policy development. The Core Strategy Group has influenced and helped to drive the programme forward. It has made recommendations to the Commissioning Body on the outcomes of service reviews and is a well established body that covers a wide range of services and clients.
- 43 The Accountable Officer is well placed to mainstream and champion the Supporting People programme. The post holder operates at a senior level and links through to key areas within the Council such as housing and social care. The effectiveness of the Accountable Officer's role has strengthened over the past 18 months. Historically this post has suffered from a number of changes in personnel. The lack of consistency limited the role's effectiveness. The current post holder has provided stability and work has been undertaken to increase the focus on the programme across the Council and with key partners.

- 44 Partnership arrangements are working well at an operational level. Examples of effective working arrangements include:
- the MAPPA⁴ arrangements, which are linked to the programme through the Criminal Justice Team and through representation by the Youth Offending Team. The joint approach taken by the Supporting People team has helped to identify accommodation for offenders who present a high risk to the public and provide support to help them sustain their tenancy;
 - there are joint working between health and social care, including the establishment of a joint post; and
 - the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) is engaged with the programme and there are several examples of service improvements, particularly the joint approach to the allocation of accommodation and support.
- 45 There is political support for the delivery of the Supporting People programme. Generally, there has been political support for the programme including examples where there have been sensitive developments of new services within local communities, although currently there is political debate concerning the provision of a site for gypsies and travellers. It is important the programme receives political support as often Supporting People service users can be marginalised and fail to access appropriate services.
- 46 The Commissioning Body has not yet developed its strategic leadership role and identified a clear longer-term vision for the programme. Commissioning Body members demonstrated a mixed level of understanding about future strategic priorities. Minutes of past meetings suggest that the Core Strategy Group has taken part in wider discussion around future strategic direction and performance monitoring, indicating that they have been driving the programme forward rather than the Commissioning Body. There are few cross-cutting strategic approaches developed and although plans are now in place, progress has been slow. Further work is required on identifying shared priorities and outcomes across service areas and partnerships.
- 47 The Commissioning Body receives regular updates on a suite of performance indicators relating to the programme. However, there is a lack of regular reports against the improvement plan and strategic development of the programme generally. The absence of strategic review and drive at this level means that there are risks that partners are not working collectively towards a common purpose and restricts the effectiveness of the programme.

Grant compliance, strategy and needs

- 48 Weaknesses outweigh strengths. There are some weaknesses in the five-year (Commissioning) Strategy and its links with other key strategies. Planning and joint commissioning across key partners and the programme is weak and the programme has no formal approach to move-on. Eligibility criteria has been agreed and applied which has led to ineligible costs being allocated to the appropriate budget and needs mapping has been completed in most areas but is not yet complete.

⁴ Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements - introduced in April 2001.

- 49 There are some weaknesses in the five-year (Commissioning) Strategy. It has not been updated to reflect current needs analysis with priorities based on data collected in 2003/04. There is no prioritisation of key groups for improvement and this makes it difficult to assess which areas are the most strategically important. The strategy fails to identify how the programme will contribute to either health or criminal justice priorities due to a much stronger focus on corporate priorities. The strategy also fails to demonstrate how the programme will improve value for money or its approach to diversity.
- 50 The alignment of the five-year (Commissioning) strategy with other key strategies is varied and in some cases weak. This is partly due to the timing of the development of existing strategies. Many of the existing housing strategies were agreed prior to the programme and the Council has not updated them since. Areas include the role the programme plays in homelessness strategy, housing strategy including the role it can play in supporting vulnerable people in the private sector. This weakens the programme's strategic impact across both the Council's key strategies and those of its key strategic partners.
- 51 There is no formal approach to providing move-on accommodation for the programme. The five-year strategy notes that this is a gap in provision, but no progress has been made to establish what the strategic approach will be. Currently there is a risk that the programme will not be able to move people in to their own accommodation when they have developed the necessary level of independence which is a key area for future successful outcomes.
- 52 Planning and joint commissioning across key partners and the programme is weak. The Council has not yet completed its strategic reviews of services (these are due to be completed fully by the end of 2007) which it sees as the main vehicle for addressing weaknesses in this area. Currently the programme lacks an over arching approach across all key strategic areas, particularly around joint commissioning across services. This is limiting the impact of the programme across all services areas.
- 53 Eligibility criteria has been developed and applied consistently. The Council has worked effectively with partners to agree the criteria and this is now published on the Supporting People website. Most providers are clear how this applies to their service and the criteria are being consistently applied. It has resulted in a retraction in funding of £227,000 for Learning Disability Services provided by Community Care services. All affected service users have had their needs reassessed and ineligible costs are being appropriately funded from social care budgets.
- 54 Needs mapping has been completed and there are systems in place to update information. This has been the basis of the five-year strategy but is not clearly linked with subsequent commissioning decisions. Needs mapping is updated on an annual basis and is used to identify gaps in provision and a clearer understanding of future need. The needs of travellers are less developed and work is on going at present to improve information held. The programme works closely with the Council's strategic housing service to keep needs information up-to-date and identify emerging trends.

Delivery arrangements

- 55 There is a balance of both strengths and weaknesses in the delivery of the programme. The team is stable, communicates effectively with partners and supports providers. Arrangements for planning and monitoring performance of the improvement plan are less effective.
- 56 The delivery of the Supporting People programme has benefited from stability in the Supporting People team. The manager has overseen the introduction of the programme, the development of the strategy, the service review programme and subsequent commissioning decisions. Team members have also remained constant over the past couple of years, with low staff turnover. The team demonstrate a broad understanding of the Supporting People agenda and providers generally reported a positive and supportive working relationship. Communication is good and queries are responded to promptly. Capacity within the team has been strengthened and officers are each leading in the different service areas to widen their experience and knowledge base. One area where a weakness remains is procurement. Consequently, the team is positively viewed across the Council and by external stakeholders.
- 57 The Council is providing support to providers. There are commissioning and contract officers within the team who lead on a different client groups and attend relevant networking groups which are providing a continuous service input into the programme and helping to build up expertise within the team. Grant payments have been made to providers accurately and on time. Smaller providers have received support through the service review process and where weaknesses have been identified they have been mentored by stronger performing providers. However, providers we spoke to, had mixed views concerning the programme's developing approach to value for money, Providers who are facing cuts in funding, reported that they were not always clear why this course of action had been followed. It is important that providers are well informed and able to identify programme improvements as a result of a consultation process.
- 58 There are good links between the Supporting people programme and the emerging LAA. The Commissioning Body has agreed in principle to the inclusion of the Supporting People grant (including the under-spend) in to the emerging LAA. This is still subject to DCLG approval. Work is on going around the LAA but there has been agreement that Supporting People outcome indicators will be a requirement, and that one of the outcome focuses will be to support independent living. This approach is helping to develop cross-authority working to support vulnerable people.
- 59 The programme has a robust approach to financial monitoring. There are regular reports provided to the Commissioning Body outlining spend and future projections in line with corporate financial procedures. Financial data is collated for each service and provider. The current underspend in the grant arose through planned decommissioning decisions and renegotiating service costs with providers. This approach is helping to inform decision-making and control expenditure.

- 60 Satisfactory arrangements are in place for fairer charging and information is easily available for service users. A charging policy was agreed by the Core Strategy Group in 2005 and is publicised on the Council's website. To compliment the policy an information leaflet has been produced and distributed. Reality checks indicated that access to this information was easily available. An exercise was jointly undertaken with the Council's benefits team to establish continuing eligibility, particularly in relation to those service users who were transitionally protected until the completion of service review. The opportunity was also taken to request specific additional information from service users to update records. To date 75 applications for Fairer Charging assessments have been received, so far 26 service users have been assessed by the Fairer Charging team as being either fully or partly eligible for Supporting People funding.
- 61 The Council is regularly submitting data to the DCLG within required timescales. Extracts are submitted on a quarterly basis and since May 2005 these have uploaded successfully and promptly. Providers are able to upload returns through the web link which has improved the timeliness of submissions. Data sent in the May 2006 upload was 93 per cent accurate, an improvement of 17 per cent from the previous quarter. The data collection software is linked to the Council's payment system which provides the corporate finance team with budget reports to inform corporate financial management systems.
- 62 The approach to risk management is satisfactory. Financial and reputational risks have been assessed by looking at the degree of impact, the likelihood of events occurring, and what controls are in place. Some work has been undertaken which should help to mitigate risk, through a joint accreditation process and information sharing protocols. However, the assessment does not in all instances fully explore the best means of mitigating the risk against the programme. The absence of robust contingency plans increases the risk of a negative impact on the programme by a service failure.
- 63 There are number of weaknesses around the performance management of the programme. The Commissioning Body does not receive regular performance reports that include information on performance on the improvement plan and there is no work plan in place for the Commissioning Body. The Supporting People team has a work plan but this is not clearly linked to the detailed improvement plan (which is discussed in more detail in judgment two). The lack of focused work plans increases the risk that the programme will not focus on key priorities as identified within the five-year strategy and slow direction in terms of keeping the programme moving forward.

Commissioning and performance

- 64 Weaknesses outweigh strengths for commissioning and performance arrangements for the programme. Joint commissioning is underdeveloped and there have been limited outcomes to jointly tender and commission new services. The approach to managing complaints is poor. Progress has been made in ensuring steady state contracts are in place, and internal providers have been treated in a similar way to external providers. Service specifications have been developed with a range of outcomes against which to monitor service delivery
- 65 The programme is not informed by a clear strategic direction and service reviews did not include a robust strategic assessment of the programme. There is ongoing work through sector reviews, to update the five-year strategy. The sector reviews are intended to define and shape future provision, to ensure that it more closely meets the needs of the local population and to focus on the prevention agenda. The sector reviews are considering not only current service users' needs but also trying to look further ahead for the programme. The lack of an up-to-date longer-term vision for the service means the commissioning of new services is not being driven by a clear strategic direction, which prioritises resources.
- 66 There have been limited outcomes from cross-authority working partnerships at a sub-regional level. There is some evidence of cross-authority working but this is in its early days of development. There has been one new scheme jointly commissioned with a neighbouring council. An accreditation procedure has been developed and agreed within the South West region that allows providers accredited by one council to be accepted by other councils subject to financial viability. The Commissioning Body has kept the ability to scrutinise and evaluate the financial records as part of its approach to value for money. Under developed cross-authority approach means the Council is not maximising all opportunities to increase the capacity of the programme.
- 67 The approach to managing complaints is poor. Despite a written policy, the administration of some complaints is disorganised and it is difficult to see if the process has been followed. Monitoring arrangements are weak and four out of seven complaints examined failed to meet agreed deadlines for a reply. There is a lack of clarity between the Council's corporate complaints process and the providers own processes. This is confusing for service users and means that the Council loses the opportunity to receive important feedback on its service.
- 68 The Council completed service reviews on time using a clear methodology. All service reviews were completed by the DCLG deadline of 31 March 2006. Positively the review timetable gave priority to reviewing services with high costs or where there were concerns about the quality or performance. Validation visits were carried out for all services bases on the Quality Assessment Framework (QAF) and service users given the opportunity to have an input. Providers confirmed that generally the process was well managed. The programme is now in a position where it has identified non-eligible costs, expensive services and services that are failing.

- 69 The programme adopted a consistent approach to reviewing both internal and external services. The approach adopted with internal providers was consistent with external providers and was overseen by an independent officer from the Primary Care Trust (PCT). All service reviews have been subject to a quality assessment by the Supporting People manager. In addition, the Council's Internal Audit team have sampled a number of review reports to monitor consistency and quality of the recommendations. This transparent approach helps ensure internal providers have not been given preferential treatment
- 70 The Council has made reasonable progress in awarding steady state contracts. There are 16 contracts now issued, ten are awaiting signature and plans are in place for the remaining contracts to progress to completion by March 2007. Contracts are being issued subject to a risk assessment based on financial risks, service concerns and potential outcomes from the sector reviews and existing priorities within the five-year strategy. Currently, 14 per cent of contracts are for one year, 31 per cent for two years, and 42 per cent for three years. There remain few that exceed a four-year period, these currently total 13 per cent of all contracts. This approach is causing some concern among providers but does allow some flexibility given the pending service reviews and the basic contractual arrangements can be extended where appropriate.
- 71 There are equitable contract arrangements in place with quality assurance stages as part of the monitoring process. The Council has not awarded Steady State contracts unless the provider has achieved level C of the QAF. The new contracts do now have a range of outcome measures. Six generic service specifications have been developed jointly with key stakeholders and providers. A number of further specifications have been developed that particularly address the specific needs of individual services that have been commissioned. Positively, the outcomes measures developed mirror those outlined in the draft DCLG outcome framework, due to be implemented in April 2007. The monitoring of targets in these key areas helps to identify how effectively services are maximising service users' independence.
- 72 The Council has a published appeals process that is managed satisfactorily. There have been 13 appeals made to the Commissioning Body who hear evidence. All appeals to date have upheld the original service review decision. Providers have been advised about the reasons for the decision and this has included several meetings with the provider. However, appeals have been considered by the Commissioning Body without any independent input. This weakens the transparency of the process.

Value for money

- 73 Weaknesses outweigh strengths in the approach to value for money for the programme. The approach to procurement and commissioning is weak. The quality of benchmarking information is mixed and while there is a reasonable understanding of costs, the comparative quality of services is not fully understood. Efficiency savings have focused on cost reduction, with less emphasis on outcomes for services. Gaps in needs analysis means that the programme can not be sure that resources are being targeted effectively and limits any value for money assessment. Value for money is improving through service reviews and partnership working but overall, the Council can not be sure that costs are consistent with the services provided.
- 74 The approach to procurement is weak. There is no robust procurement strategy in place to improve value for money for new and re-commissioned services. The programme is procuring new services on competitive tender but has not succeeded in attracting any of the larger national providers to bring a better balance to the local market. The Council has been slow to develop a corporate approach to procurement. This is reflected in the programme and the way that services are procured. The Commissioning Body is beginning to focus on priority areas for the programme but has not yet explicitly invited tenders to bid for new services from a prioritised list expressed in the five-year strategy. As the Council moves into its re-commissioning phase a procurement strategy would confirm commissioning intentions, timescales and processes and help to increase stability within the provider market.
- 75 The Council's approach to the management of value for money in the service is not comprehensive. There is a reasonable understanding of the costs of services and how they compare to others - although dated - but the quality in terms of successful outcomes is not yet fully understood. Comparisons do not include an assessment of outcomes for similar services. Through service reviews, costs were compared to national and regional benchmarks but did not fully consider the nature and quality of some services and their intended outcomes for service users.
- 76 The Council has used benchmarking to identify high-cost areas and prioritise these for early reviews and for further discussions. However, the Council recognise that the quality of benchmarking that is available to them at this time is mixed. Much of the data used is now out-of-date while in some areas benchmarking information does not exist. The Supporting People programme does not routinely compare its staff, overhead and administration costs to other similar councils. The Council recognise that without clear benchmarking information, the Council is unable to effectively review and challenge value for money and are taking steps to address this.

- 77 Efficiency savings have focused on cost reduction, with less emphasis on quality of services. The performance management system does not routinely review service cost alongside service performance or incentivise services to achieve value for money. In addition, there are no efficiency targets identified for the programmes in its improvement plan. However, it is recognised that the planned restructuring review of the supporting team will have to produce savings to contribute towards the Council's overall efficiency statement.
- 78 The Council is not in a position where it can make a full value for money assessment about the commissioning and procurement for the programme. The gaps in needs analysis makes it difficult for the Council to judge if the programme is delivering services that are strategically relevant or meeting all the diverse needs of the local community. There are some operational services where the Commissioning Body lacks the necessary information to know if they are strategically relevant, such as some services for refugees. This is a fundamental weakness to achieving value for money as the programme is not able to be confident that it is targeting resources at key areas.
- 79 Value for money is improving through lower costs and improved outcomes arising from the completed service reviews. Increases in quality standards as measured by the QAF have been achieved alongside savings of nearly £230,000 and a further minimum £390,000 from current negotiations with providers. The percentage of services achieving above a level C has risen from 45 per cent to 86 per cent. The Commissioning Body has agreed that steady state contracts will not be awarded until a level C assessment is achieved. The Supporting People grant is achieving higher quality and improving services for less money.
- 80 Ineligible funding is challenged and grant withdrawn. One of the main examples is the removal of ineligible funding for care services to people with learning disabilities. The transfer of costs to social care budgets has been well managed to limit any impact on service users and reduce any destabilising impact on Council budgets.
- 81 Value for money is improving through partnership working. The Council has also worked in partnership with the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) to jointly fund improved services for older people. An existing category two sheltered housing scheme is being redeveloped as part of the Council's sheltered housing provision with joint capital funding from the PCT. The project also includes the use of smart technology to assist people to live more independently in their own home. Joint projects help to reduce development costs and can help reduce the demands placed on providers.
- 82 The Council is also working on a regional basis to develop a shared approach to value for money. There has been some joint work undertaken with councils across the South West region to develop a shared approach. Costs information has been shared and where there is a joint provider, schemes costs have been compared. This approach has also been taken in its adoption of a joint accreditation process for providers. This joint work is helping to establish a clearer approach to value for money through a regional tool kit. The methodology is published and has been used as part of the service review process.

- 83 The following table shows figures supplied to the DCLG for the Platinum Cut in 2003. The average unit cost in Bournemouth is significantly higher than the costs in the South West and England. Services reviews have reduced costs but forecast costs are likely to remain above average.

Table 1

	Per head of population	Per unit	Per unit – excluding community alarms	Per unit- excluding community alarms and sheltered housing
Bournemouth	£ 1.41	£ 46.06	£ 28.30	£ 110.32
Region	£ 0.73	£ 33.33	£ 36.46	£ 80.42
England	£ 0.70	£ 28.30	£ 34.71	£ 76.37

The reconfiguration of services is improving value for money. There are a number of services where costs are less or there is an improvement in the quality and relevance of services. The current underspend arose through the focus on costs, particularly expensive services as part of the service reviews. Contract negotiations continue and further savings are anticipated. Four providers were identified as having very low costs; an increase in charges was negotiated, further to an inflationary uplift. An updated comparison of costs post the reviews have commenced and are due to report in the summer of 2007.

Service user involvement

- 84 Strengths outweigh weaknesses in the way that service users are involved in the programme. There is evidence of strong consultation and involvement of service users at a strategic level. Service users are shaping the delivery of the programme and influencing the future direction of the service
- 85 Service user involvement is embedded in the programme. There is a track record of involvement within some adult care services. The Supporting People team have worked to make direct links in to these established groups (networks) as well as encouraging a number of service users to take up membership of the Core Strategy Group. Outreach work is used to link in to different service user groups within the local community, including the local prison liaison group. This approach is helping to broaden contact between the programme and service user groups based in the community.

- 86 Service users are having an impact on shaping the delivery of the programme. Consultation has resulted in changes to leaflets and contract service specifications. There are some examples of service users influencing the commissioning of new services. These include young people through a representative on the Core Strategy Group which finally resulted in a bid to the Housing Corporation for to develop new services. The 'Where We Live Group' has provided feedback and input into commissioning new Learning Disabilities services.
- 87 Service users are members of the Core Strategy Group. There are places for up to three members, currently there are members representing substance misuse and street homeless. In addition, service users form part of the network groups including, Older People Strategic Commissioning Group, Bournemouth Mental Health Local Implementation Team, Housing Forum and the 'Where We Live Group'. All the network groups have representatives from carer and voluntary organisations. These formal mechanisms ensure there is a voice for service users at a strategic level within the programme.
- 88 There is a commitment to involving service users in the future development of the programme. Some groups/agencies have been commissioned to assist with the Sector Reviews in their area of expertise such as, the Bournemouth Forum for Learning Disabilities and Disability Wessex for Physical Disabilities. The Council also uses different groups as a sounding board as part of its approach to strategy development, such as, the recent consultation with older people on the future vision for sheltered housing in Bournemouth. This inclusive approach helps service users to influence future improvements to the programme.
- 89 The programme is using service user feedback to influence the future direction of the service. A support service survey has recently been carried out to establish satisfaction levels, future needs, how service users would like to become more involved with the programme and in particular the ways in which they would like to be consulted in future. A pictorial version of the survey was developed for people with a learning disability. The results were being analysed during the course of the inspection. This approach helps to make delivery of the programme shaped in a way that best fits with service users' expectations and needs.
- 90 Service users consulted during service reviews did not routinely receive feedback on the outcomes or how their views contributed to any improvement. However, they were kept informed where there were plans to significantly change the service provided. Service users have been consulted following decisions to decommission services and there is evidence to show that service users were treated with a sensitive approach in these circumstances. It is important to provide feedback to service users as this encourages service users to provide feedback in the future and demonstrate how their views are being used to deliver future improvements.

Access to services and information

- 91** There is a balance of both strengths and weaknesses around access to services and information. Access arrangements have become clearer and include better assessment and referral processes. Written and electronic information is generally high quality and available in appropriate formats. However, physical access arrangements are poor and reception areas do not meet the needs of some service users, telephone calls are not always managed efficiently and customers' experience of dealing with staff at various access points for the programme is mixed.
- 92** Approaches to assessment and referral for services funded by the Supporting People programme have improved. Access has improved generally, but in particular for offenders and people with drug or alcohol dependency. The DAAT⁵ has established a central assessment hub through which all referrals are now considered which is ensuring that both treatment programmes and accommodation needs are linked together. This approach is making it easier for vulnerable people to access services.
- 93** Information for service users is clear, and helpful. Generally, published information was of a high quality and found to be useful in directing vulnerable people to services. There is a good range of information about Supporting People on the Council's website, and navigation is easy. The website includes a directory of local services, but lacks information on national contacts. The 'Better Care, Higher Standards' charter does not have a reference to Supporting People and this is a weakness.
- 94** Customers' experience of dealing with staff at various access points for the programme is mixed. Front line staff do not always have sufficient knowledge about the programme to signpost enquiries effectively, including the Council's own housing reception. Other offices were helpful and knowledgeable, particularly the local CAB. Not all offices have information leaflets on display. Many of the locations visited are busy with enquires from the public, and where information is not routinely displayed, customers have to queue. This does not make accessing information about Supporting People services easy for vulnerable people.
- 95** Telephone calls are not always managed efficiently. Mystery shopping telephone calls found a variable service in the speed of response. This included having to wait for over 20 rings to a 24-hour domestic help line causing the caller to hang up. This could make it difficult for vulnerable people to access services, particularly in an emergency situation.
- 96** Physical access arrangements to the Supported housing team are poor and reception areas do not meet the needs of some service users. A mystery shopping exercise demonstrated this, including not being able to speak to the team by telephone as this was constantly engaged. The mystery shopper was referred to a reception which presented a challenging environment for vulnerable people. Current arrangements make it difficult for vulnerable people to visit the Supporting People team at the Council's Town Hall building.

⁵ Drug and Alcohol Team.

Diversity

- 97 Diversity is an area where weaknesses significantly outweigh strengths. Corporate leadership of the equality and diversity agenda is weak and consequently overall progress has been slow. The Council has not put in place systems to ensure that it understands the needs of the entire community, although work is ongoing to improve this. Limited training has been given to staff and councillors, equality impact assessments have not been completed and a number of key strategies lack a focus on diversity issues.
- 98 Corporate leadership of the equality and diversity agenda is weak and consequently overall progress has been slow. There is an emerging clearer corporate vision around community leadership but the impact on improving diversity and the way services are delivered has been slow. The Council remains at level one of the local government equalities standard and the Cabinet has recently agreed a target that will not achieve level two until 2008. This means that the Council has so far only set out its commitment to service equality. There is no clear plan in place that demonstrates how the current situation will improve or an agreed strategy that articulates how the Council plans to improve in this area.
- 99 The Council has not ensured that all councillors have training on equality and diversity to ensure equality of access and taking proper account of equality and the diversity of all service users. There is limited understanding of diversity at a political level. Councillors were knowledgeable about local services and support groups operating within the local community but did not demonstrate a broad understanding of diverse needs and how the Council plans to move the agenda forward and shape services that are sensitive to cultural and individual needs. The Council's political leadership has taken the decision not to offer diversity training to councillors, taking the view that many will receive training in their paid employment. This approach presents a risk that some councillors may not undergo any training and that there is no mechanism to capture the understanding of diversity issues among councillors. This weakness could limit progress made against delivering targets in the Corporate Plan 2006/07 such as, 'Customer First'.
- 100 Equality impact assessments have not been completed. The five-year strategy is not explicit on what action the programme will take to ensure that the needs of all vulnerable people are met in a consistent and equitable way. There is no clear indication how the programme systematically recognises the needs of all diverse members of the community it provides services to. The programme fails to articulate how it takes in to account the diverse needs of the local community.

- 101** The Council has not put in place systems to ensure that it understands the needs of the entire community. The programme is failing to capture information about all service users. Needs mapping has only recently been completed for black and minority ethnic groups, settled travellers, transient gypsies and travellers. This research has been analysed (after the inspection) but has not yet fed into the Council's strategic approach, including the five-year strategy. The programme is also failing to capture information across all diverse groups as part of its service user feedback.
- 102** Straplines are not available on all published information and key documents. The Council has made provision for information to be translated in to a required language or made available in an alternative format. However, this is not consistently applied and is not always present on Supporting People literature. This inconsistent approach means that it is more difficult for some service users to access information about the programme.
- 103** The Council is not training staff on a regular basis on equality and diversity issues. All staff receive training as part of their induction process but there is no regular programme to ensure that this training is kept up-to-date. Staff demonstrated a basic understanding of diversity issues but their focus was on black and ethnic minority issues. This was accompanied by an inability to set out how identified weaknesses would be strengthened as part of the programme's delivery.
- 104** Support services have been reviewed to assess the suitability of the services and whether they accommodate the various needs of the people using them. This was a standard feature of the Quality Assessment Framework and the validation visits. This means that at an operational level services are being provided in an appropriate environment and are working to improve the way that they address all diverse needs within the community.
- 105** The programme is helping to provide services to some hard-to-reach groups. Bournemouth has a refuge which provides a greater number of units per head of population, than the PAF⁶ indicator requires, and has an outreach service. Domestic violence is a high priority of the Community Safety Partnership which links into the Core Strategy Group and the draft LAA includes outcomes for survivors of domestic violence.

Outcomes for service users

- 106** There are more strengths than weaknesses in terms of outcomes for service users. Failing services have been decommissioned and a number of new services have been commissioned or reconfigured to improve the quality of provision. Service users seen expressed satisfaction with the accommodation and support provided. Support planning arrangements are in place but lack some clear outcome targets. There remains limited choice for some service users and a need for more floating support to provide greater flexibility.

⁶ Performance measure for councils.

- 107** The programme has successfully commissioned 15 new services (6 of which were provided through pipeline funding arrangements) and remodelled 9 existing schemes to provide more appropriate services, 2 of which now provide floating support services. In total the programme has delivered new services for over 270 vulnerable people since 2003. There are a further two schemes under negotiation which will provide a floating support service for people with a visual impairment and an accommodation-based scheme for the frail elderly. The programme is helping to deliver new services to those people where a need has been identified or where providers were not providing services to an acceptable standard for service users.
- 108** The range of specialist services has increased. One example of this is the support service for people living with HIV or Aids which is jointly commissioned with a neighbouring council. This is helping service users by targeting support where there are a range of complex needs.
- 109** Support plans are in place and the processes were checked as part of validation visits and included interviews with service users. Visits to schemes during the inspection found that support plans were in place and contained eligible services that promoted independence. Generally service users were aware of their support plan and held their own copy. Some plans seen, lacked sufficient outcomes for service users. Despite this, the Support planning process is helping vulnerable people to access support to assist their independence.
- 110** Schemes visited are providing good quality supported accommodation. Schemes had a focus on maximising opportunities for independence and staff and tenants were clear what the benefits of the service are. Tenants all expressed high levels of satisfaction with the service.
- 111** The decommissioning of services has been well managed. The Council has taken care to ensure that vulnerable people have been consulted during the process and not placed in a stressful situation. Service users have been rehoused in appropriate supported accommodation which presented the programme and officers with a considerable challenge over a short period of time.
- 112** The programme can evidence a number of case studies that set out the benefits of the Supporting People programme in Bournemouth. Providers demonstrated a range of examples where the programme is making a significant difference to people's lives and helping to promote and enhance their independent living experiences. Particular examples included;
- a former rough sleeper with an alcohol dependency who now lives independently with floating support services and is following a fulltime educational course and re-established family relationships; and
 - a single parent with a diagnosis of depression who was assisted with serious debt problems and moved to permanent accommodation. This enabled her to leave hospital, and her daughter (who was being bullied) to move to a new school.

- 113 The programme has failed to commission sufficient new floating support services that are identified as a strategic priority. Service users themselves have expressed a preference for more floating support but despite this the programme has only increased the provision for 47 people, restricted to three client groups. This is limiting the flexibility of the programme and restricting the choice of services available to service users.

Summary

- 114 We have assessed the administration of the Supporting People programme by the Bournemouth Borough Council to be a fair, one-star service.
- 115 Governance and delivery arrangements are effective. The team is stable, communicates effectively with partners, and supports providers. Reasonable progress has been made issuing steady state contracts and all service reviews were completed. There are positive outcomes for service users and the quality of services is improving. Service user involvement is well embedded in to the programme and service users are shaping the delivery of the programme and influencing the future direction of the service.
- 116 There are areas of weakness in the programme's delivery. The Commissioning Body has not yet fully developed its strategic leadership role and established a clear longer-term vision for the programme. Access arrangements are mixed and progress on equality and diversity is slow. Planning and joint commissioning is weak. Value for money is improving but recent work has not yet produced outcomes and, procurement is weak.

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

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

- 117 The Council has a balance of strengths and weaknesses in delivering improvement to the programme. There have been improvements at a corporate level in external assessments and improvements in important services such as homelessness and services for children and young people. The Council is also working to improve the way it delivers affordable homes. Performance has improved in Supporting People key performance indicators and shows strong performance in maintaining independent living and planned moves for vulnerable people. Value for money is improving, though from a position of comparatively high costs. There is a track record of tackling difficult commissioning decisions and handling these sensitively. However, the programme has been slow in setting up formal performance management arrangements for the service improvement plan and while some improvements have been delivered on time, there has been some slippage. There is a mixed track record of improving key corporate and social care indicators and progress on equalities and diversity has also been slow.
- 118 At a corporate level the Council's services are improving. The latest Audit Commission Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) is three stars and improving well (December 2005). The direction of travel statement in December 2005 was assessed as 'improving adequately', with variable progress in improving services (weaker areas including environment and affordable housing) but significant 'work in progress' on developing corporate arrangements. The Joint Area Review carried out in December 2005 summarised that homeless young people have access to a range of agencies that offer advice, support and guidance and that young people leaving the care of the Council are helped to find accommodation. However, there is a shortage of affordable and suitable housing. The JAR report made a specific recommendation to improve housing for vulnerable young people. The Council has now implemented the project management approach to the delivery of affordable housing under the Homes for People Programme Board which in early 2007 has reached agreement with developers to build 134 new homes. A review of the current Planning Policy on affordable housing is underway to produce a policy that will help to deliver generating more affordable housing

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- 119** There have been significant improvements achieved in the way that homeless services are managed and this is reflected in improving performance indicators for 2004/05, particularly for vulnerable homeless people. Improving indicators include, significant improvement in the number of families staying in temporary accommodation, the number of rough sleepers locally, the average stay in hostel accommodation, and the average stay in bed and breakfast accommodation. The Government has set a national target to reduce temporary accommodation by 50 per cent by 2010. The Council has already met this target. This has resulted in Bed and Breakfast expenditure reducing from £1.4 million in 2002/03 to £0.15 million in 2005/06. This improving performance was recognised in 2005/06 when the Council was made Regional Homelessness Champion.
- 120** Children and Young People Services have a positive track record of achievement. The Council were one of the first Joint Area Reviews and gained a score that demonstrated that its services were improving. Children's care services has moved from a Joint Review in 2002 of only 'serving some people' well with 'uncertain prospects' to 'serving most people well' and 'promising prospects' in 2005, which was maintained in 2006.
- 121** Key performance indicators for the supporting people programme have shown a sustained improvement. The percentage of short-term accommodation with support being used has increased from an average of 89 per cent in 2003/04 to nearly 96 per cent in 2005/06. The percentage of moves that were planned has remained at around 70 per cent, although current performance suggests that this is improving at just over 71 per cent. The number of people helped to maintain independent living is shows strong performance and remains static at around 98 per cent.
- 122** The Supporting People team has completed actions as required by the Government within the timescales set. This includes the service review programme by 31 March 2006 and having in place the five-year strategy by March 2005. It has also submitted required quarterly data.
- 123** The track record on delivering value for money is improving though from a position where service costs were expensive compared to peer groups. There is an increasing focus on value for money which is evident through the review process. Costs have been challenged and this has led to a reduction in the level of costs of services. The average unit cost (excluding sheltered) has reduced from £141.86 in 2003/04 to a forecasted figure of £136.46 in 2006/07. Against this there has been an improvement in the quality of services as rated against the QAF assessments.

- 124 The Council's track record of improving adult social care indicators is mixed. Adult social care indicators have improved since 2003 but a recent dip in performance has led to a judgement of 'uncertain prospects' in 2006. The Council has put in place an improvement programme to address the issues raised. There has been a slight rise in intensive home care service but performance is still below that of similar authorities. There has been an improvement in the number of delayed transfers but there continues to be a number of learning disabled clients who remain in hospital accommodation. There has been a joint pan Dorset approach addressing this issue and a project manager has jointly been employed to relocate these clients in more appropriate accommodation. Performance in assisting people to remain independent is below that of similar authorities and the number of people helped to live at home has fallen in all service user groups, with older people falling in to the lowest performance band. More recent (unaudited) performance indicators do indicate a more positive direction of travel. The helped to live at home indicators are improving in an upward trend
- 125 The Council has made slow progress in improving its approach to equality and diversity. The Council has not made progress against performance indicator (BV002a), the Equality Standard for local government. It has remained at level one since 2003/04. The Corporate Improvement Plan 2006/07, states that the Council has a target to reach level two this year. A recent Cabinet decision agreed to slip this target back, in line with regional targets of 2008. This means that outcomes for service users have been delayed a further year.
- 126 A number of key improvements within the Supporting People Improvement Plan (v.7) have not been delivered. There are a significant number of priorities listed as amber and in danger of missing their target for delivery. These include some important weaknesses mentioned earlier in the report, such as
- undertaking needs research of BME groups which has slipped from September 2006 (subsequently completed December 2006);
 - sector reviews which have slipped back from march 2007 to a completion date towards the end of 2008 (subsequently rescheduled to complete December 2007); and
 - assessing the need for move-on accommodation was due to complete in December 2006 and this is now classified as a red action which will not be delivered until the completion of the sector reviews (December 2007).

Failures to deliver key improvements delay improvement. It is positive that the Council has recently moved forward in areas where there has been slippage.

How does the Council manage performance?

- 127 There are a balance of strengths and weaknesses in the way that the Council is managing performance. The five-year strategy lacks a clear longer-term vision for the service and there are a number of weaknesses in key future plans. Performance management of the improvement programme and its staff are weak. Political leadership and financial management of the programme are strong. This is underpinned by strong corporate leadership, led by the Chief Executive which has resulted in the Council responding positively to the inspection and focussing on key weaknesses. The Council demonstrates self-awareness and is learning from organisations that are performing well and successful internal services. The Council is currently implementing improvements to the way it manages and learns from complaints.
- 128 The five-year strategy lacks a clear longer-term vision for the programme. The strategy describes a wide range of needs but fails to prioritise which is most important, linking it to robust needs analysis. The strategy lacks overarching aims and fails to effectively link in to broader related priorities across the Council and key strategic partners. The strategy requires an update and input from more robust comprehensive needs information. Due to a number of weaknesses the strategy fails to provide a clear and ambitious direction for the programme as discussed earlier in the report. Within the revised service improvement plan there is an undertaking that after each sector review is completed the strategy will be refreshed to take into account the outcomes from each review. This incremental approach to updating the strategy will enable each sector review to inform the strategy but it will not be until the end of 2007 when a comprehensive review can be undertaken and the strategy prioritised across all sectors.
- 129 Plans are not SMART⁷. The Council has self-assessed the programme and modelled an improvement plan based on the ambition to achieve an excellent service, as measured against the Audit Commission's key lines of enquires. This approach is in line with the corporate priority to achieve excellence. However, the plan in its current form is unrealistic, particularly around time and capacity to deliver outcomes. As a result, there are a high percentage of targets listed as amber or red which means that targets are being missed or slipped backwards. Consequently, service users have to wait longer to benefit from improved outcomes. In response to feedback the Council made amendments to the service improvement plan, to help address criticism around timescales and deliverability. Concerns remain, particularly around the prioritisation process, lack of milestones where target times have been lengthened, continuing lack of outcomes and amendments have not been agreed by the Commissioning Body or Core Strategy Group.

⁷ Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely.

- 130** The improvement plan is internally-focused and lacks a focus on outcomes. The plan has been officer driven, and has a strong focus on improved processes. Although better processes are important, improvements identified are not always set out in a way that service users can recognise. As a result, the improvement plan fails to demonstrate what influence if any service users are having in shaping the future delivery of services. The lack of outcomes makes it more difficult to manage performance within the service or be accountable to service users.
- 131** Performance management of the improvement plan is weak. The programme has been slow setting up formal performance management arrangements for delivery of the service improvement plan. A working group has been established which includes the Cabinet member, Chair of the Caring for People Scrutiny and Review Panel and the Accountable Officer. The group was set up as recently as July 2006.
- 132** Performance management arrangements for the Supporting People team are not robust or embedded. The appraisal process is not consistently applied and varies in quality. Staff do not have individual performance targets set and many of the appraisals seen had lapsed over the 12-month corporate target for completion (the corporate process indicates that an annual appraisal should take place with a six-monthly update). The lack of regular staff appraisal reduces the ability to identify under performance and associated training or development needs.
- 133** The Commissioning Body is not effectively planning their priorities and workloads. The group does not have a written and agreed work plan that is based on a comprehensive review of their priorities, objectives and capacity. This is in contrast to the Core Strategy Group which has a written plan against which performance can be measured. The absence of a work plan for the Commissioning Body makes it difficult to assess their performance or understand how the group will be driving the programme forward in the future.
- 134** Risk arrangements lack adequate contingency planning. Current assessments identify both financial and non-financial risks to the programme but fail to identify the actions required to mitigate risk and reduce any likely impact. Many of the actions listed simply refer to working with partners or established a list or plan. The risk assessment is not dated and it is difficult to assess when it was last reviewed or updated.
- 135** The Council failed to complete a risk assessment of failing to secure Government approval to spend the Supporting People under-spend through the developing LAA. In response to inspection feedback a proposal went to the Commissioning Body outlining a contingency plan. Subsequently the DCLG have confirmed that the cumulative under spend (forecast to be in the region of £2.1 million by the end of the 2006/07 financial year) can be carried forward into 2007/08 budget. The impact of this is that a planning and commissioning strategy can be developed working at aligning some of this money with the LAA and also a longer-term commissioning plan linked with the sector review outcomes.

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- 136** There is strong corporate leadership and this is helping to drive through improvements to the Supporting People programme in key weak areas identified earlier in the report and gives greater confidence that future improvements will be delivered. Led by the Chief Executive, the Council has responded positively to the inspection and is now beginning to develop targets to drive through improvement. Since the inspection the Council has agreed a corporate plan that articulates how equality and diversity improvements will be delivered. Further work is required to identify efficiency targets. To date efficiency savings made by the programme have arisen from a non-inflationary increase in Supporting People contract prices. This resulted in payments to providers being held at a constant price, producing a saving of approximately £357,000 in 2005/06. Projected savings for 2006/07 are £281,887 based on restricting and in some cases reducing contract prices. High level corporate support ensures that the programme is mainstreamed and capacity is maximised to drive through future improvement.
- 137** Political leadership of the programme is strong. Councillors demonstrated an understanding of the programme and how it is aiming to maximise independent living for vulnerable people. Councillors have supported the Commissioning Body to take difficult decisions and during the commissioning of new schemes. Balanced against this is the much weaker strategic leadership of the Commissioning Body. The Commissioning Body has failed to identify what the most urgent priorities are for the programme and many of the improvements to the programme in terms of new developments have been more opportunistic rather than based on an established set of objectives. Minutes from meetings held in 2007 demonstrate that the group is now requesting reports setting out the strategic relevance of new bids. This suggests that the group are beginning to work in a more strategic way.
- 138** Financial management systems and processes are strong. The financial management of the programme is fully integrated into the corporate monitoring and reporting mechanism which includes reports to the Core Strategy Group and the Commissioning Body. Internal audit has been used to randomly check reliability and at a corporate level the role of the scrutiny and review panels have played a role in reviewing performance.
- 139** The Council shows self-awareness and the Supporting People team are aware of what it needs to do to develop the programme. There are plans in place to carry out service reviews which will include funding streams, needs analysis and a joint commissioning approach. Work is ongoing to develop the LAA which includes Supporting People and steady state contracts are to be amended to take in to account the DCLG's outcome requirements. These are all areas that are covered within improvement plans.

- 140 The Council is learning from organisations that are performing well and since the inspection has put plans in place to improve its learning from complaints. The Supporting People team has learnt from London Borough of Hounslow around eligibility criteria and Hampshire County Council regarding how to review services. The Council plans to record and monitor all complaints using its CRM system. The use of CRM will provide improved and quicker collation of management information at a corporate stored on a single data base. The Council has a target to go live with the new process from June 2007. Overall, the programme is benefiting from learning on an ad hoc basis driven by a particular project, but is failing to benefit from learning from day-to-day management experiences.
- 141 The programme is learning from successful initiatives and replicating this approach across service areas. The joined up approach of services for criminal justice service users is being replicated for mental health service users. This will enable service users to have a central point of access to all related services and enable the programme to co-ordinate and link in to other key services to provide a co-ordinated service. This should provide a better outcome for service users and help to strengthen partnership working within the programme.

Does the Council have the capacity to improve?

- 142 Strengths outweigh weaknesses in this area. The Supporting People team is now well established and benefiting from improved leadership and governance. Partnership working is enhancing capacity, the programme is financially strong and ICT is working well. The programme has taken action to address weaknesses identified earlier in the report and there are plans in place and additional corporate resources are being invested to support improvement in key areas. However, resource planning is weak and improvements in internal capacity are mixed.
- 143 The Supporting People team is now well established and benefiting from improved leadership and governance. Leadership has been strengthened and effective partnerships are now established for the governance of the programme. The Council has successfully worked with both health and probation partners to secure improved attendance at the Commissioning Body. This is helping to secure much stronger engagement with the programme and will improve arrangements for joint work in the future through the LAA.
- 144 The programme is using partnerships to enhance its capacity. Key strategic partners see the programme as a useful vehicle through which to deliver services. Alongside this, there is a developing partnership between the programme and the LAA. This should benefit service users in providing a more joined up approach to the delivery of services and strengthen the skills mix within the programme.

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- 145 There are strong links from the programme to the developing Local Area Agreement (LAA). Bournemouth is in the third phase of LAAs and currently at the short listing stage. In September 2006 the Commissioning Body agreed to pool the Supporting People underspend (£2.1 million) through the LAAs enabling provision. The Supporting People programme is linked to the LAA project board and if the pooling request is successful, funding will be administered through the board. This will help to enable Supporting People services across a wider geographical area and should help to produce a stronger approach to value for money.
- 146 Capacity within the programme is improving. Management capacity has been strengthened by the recent appointment of a Strategic Commissioning Manager in the business unit. This is a key post that has line management and operational responsibility for the programme. The team also have greater competency arising from a period of stability. There has also been corporate commitment to the appointment and funding of consultants to aid in the preparation of this inspection and provide some external challenge.
- 147 In the medium-term, financial plan the Council has provided £30,000 of additional funding for salaries to maintain the capacity of the team in 2006/07 and 2007/08. Taking into account recharges for corporately funded services the Council is contributing £140,000 towards the administration of the programme.
- 148 Benchmarking information is being updated and used to inform the programme's approach to value for money. All available benchmarking information has been used and exemplar information from neighbouring authorities has been used when new services have been tendered. The South West regional information will be refreshed in May 2007 including an assessment of the supporting people administration grant.
- 149 The Supporting People programme is financially strong. Threats to funding cuts have been well managed and the programme has exceeded target savings. Ineligible funding has been withdrawn in a managed way and service costs have reduced overall year-on-year. The programme can demonstrate that it has made a contribution to the Council's wider efficiency agenda, contributing £287,000 to the efficiency agenda and it is anticipated that the steady state contracting regime will deliver savings in region of £600,000.
- 150 The programme has attracted additional external funding in to the programme. The Council successfully submitted a bid to DCLG to help improve its ability to complete the service reviews. An additional £20,500 was secured which helped to increase capacity during a period of high demand.
- 151 ICT support to the programme is working well. Records are being well maintained and payments to providers are accurate and being made on time. The Programme has use of up-to-date software that is enabling providers to electronically up load quarterly performance data to the team. Systems are helping the Supporting People team to record performance data and process payments easily.

152 The Council is investing in improved project management arrangements. Project management is now being promoted at a corporate level and all major projects are now being driven by PRINCE2 methodology. The service improvement plans are recognised as 'high risk projects' and some are now being managed with projects plans and governance arrangements in place, such as affordable housing known as 'homes for people'. The work currently underway on sector reviews is using this approach and is improving the way that service improvement planning is delivered.

153 Additional resources are being invested at the corporate centre, to improve the way that services are provided to meet the diverse needs of the local community. There is now a clear plan to ensure the target of reaching Level two by March 2008 is achieved. Many of the recommendations in the report are progressing and action taken such as;

- a review of diversity training is underway with the development of a bespoke training programme to raise awareness of sexual orientation, religion and belief;
- mandatory training for councillors after the May 2007 election;
- an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) template and guidance has been produced and training will begin in March 2007 enabling a minimum of 200 EIAs to be completed by March 2008 - Business Unit service plans currently being put together for 2007/08 all include actions to carry out EIAs and also to respond to the Disability Equality Scheme;
- through the Corporate Improvement Programme the Council is developing a mechanism for sharing consultation contacts and processes across the Council and between partners to improve consultation with diverse groups - the aim is to have a single network and streamlined contacts;
- to improve the range of data and analysis of diverse needs across the Council work is ongoing to procure a joint Human Resource and payroll system which should help to increase staff management capacity; and
- an Equality and Diversity Strategy Group has been formed and will include co-ordinators from staff networks. The groups remit will monitor diversity training, EIAs and the collection of monitoring data associated with the recruitment and selection of staff. This group will report directly to the Corporate Improvement Programme Board.

These actions should help to improve the range of diverse information that the Council has available to shape its services, improve the way it manages performance in this area and have a clear plan that shows how it will address weaknesses.

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- 154 The Council is working to share good practice at a regional level. Membership of the cross-authority regional groups has resulted in the sharing of good practice and initiatives. These include shared understanding of around the steady state contract, accreditation passporting, long leaseholder policy and decommissioning protocol. There has been joint training on service reviews and VFM research and analysis. Work is currently being undertaken on reconnections policy and outcomes for service users. This approach is helping to increase capacity within the programme.
- 155 The programme has put in place measures that will help to improve identified weaknesses (discussed earlier in the report). In December 2006 the housing service completed an analysis of the housing needs of black and ethnic minority people living locally and this is being used to inform the on going sector reviews. The Council is working in partnership with the Borough of Poole to engage and consult with both the Gypsy and Traveller community and settled community in respective boroughs. The partnership have employed a consultative team to examine issues of accommodation need and service delivery for Gypsies and Travellers. The sector review programme has been brought forward to be completed by the end of 2007 which will enable the programme to update its strategic approach sooner. The Homeless strategy which is due to be published in March 2007 will have a Move on strategy contained within it.
- 156 The Supporting People programme is developing joint commissioning arrangements although outcomes to date have been limited. There has been some joint commissioning of new services and some schemes are due to be operational in 2007, such as the joint Home Improvement Agency service with Poole Council. However, progress in joint commissioning has been slow. There has been joint work across the region to establish accreditation procedures and a joint approach to value for money.
- 157 Improvements in internal capacity are mixed but improving. Staff satisfaction is improving across the Council. The most recent Council staff survey highlights improvement in satisfaction since 2004. Nine out of thirteen overall measures have risen, including four out of six high priority areas now show higher satisfaction, including leadership and direction. However, capacity has been reduced by high levels of sickness. In the last year, sickness levels within the Adult and Community Support directorate have increased although recent performance information suggests an improvement to around 4 per cent loss of working days (equivalent to approximately nine days). The Council has invested in an external consultant to support improvement. The programme has not been prioritised at a corporate level to ensure that specialist skills are made available. Plans indicated that the additional capacity provided by the new post of procurement officer was not being made available to the programme until late in 2007 which was after steady state contracts were due to be negotiated. In response to feedback from the inspection the work plan for the procurement manager has now been revised and scheduled to complement the issuing of the Steady State contracts. It is important that these additional resources are made available to the programme in a timely and helpful way.

Summary

- 158** Our judgement is that the Council's Supporting People programme has on balance 'promising' prospects for improvement.
- 159** There have been improvements in performance at a corporate level, in some important service such as homelessness and in some key performance indicators. Value for money is also improving though from a low baseline. The Supporting People team is now well established and benefiting from improved managerial and political leadership and governance. Corporate leadership is strong and playing a role in improving the service. This gives greater confidence that improvements will be delivered. Partnership working is enhancing capacity and the programme is financially strong. The Council demonstrates self-awareness and is learning from organisations that are performing well but is failing to learn systematically from complaints.
- 160** However, there are a number of barriers to improvement. The five-year strategy lacks a clear longer-term vision for the service and there are some weaknesses in key future plans. Performance management of the programme's improvement plan and its staff are weak and there has been some slippage on improvement plan targets. Improvements in internal capacity are mixed and joint commissioning arrangements have not yet been fully developed. The track record of improving key corporate and social care indicators is mixed and progress on equalities and diversity has also been slow.

Appendix 1 – Performance indicators

Demographic information

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

Table 2

Measure	Bournemouth	England
Population (mid-2004) ⁸	163,600	57,851,100
Percentage of the population aged 65+ (mid-2004)	22.8	18.5
Percentage from minority ethnic groups (all groups other than White – British 2004)	3.3	10.44
Percentage unemployment (claimant count rate) ⁹	2.0	2.4
Deprivation Index (1 highest, 354 lowest) ¹⁰	109	-

⁸ Source: midyear population estimates (2004).

⁹ Source: claimant count with rates and proportions (December 2006).

¹⁰ Source: deprivation Index 2004, average ward score for the authority.

Figure 2 Percentage of the population¹¹ in each age group compared with England

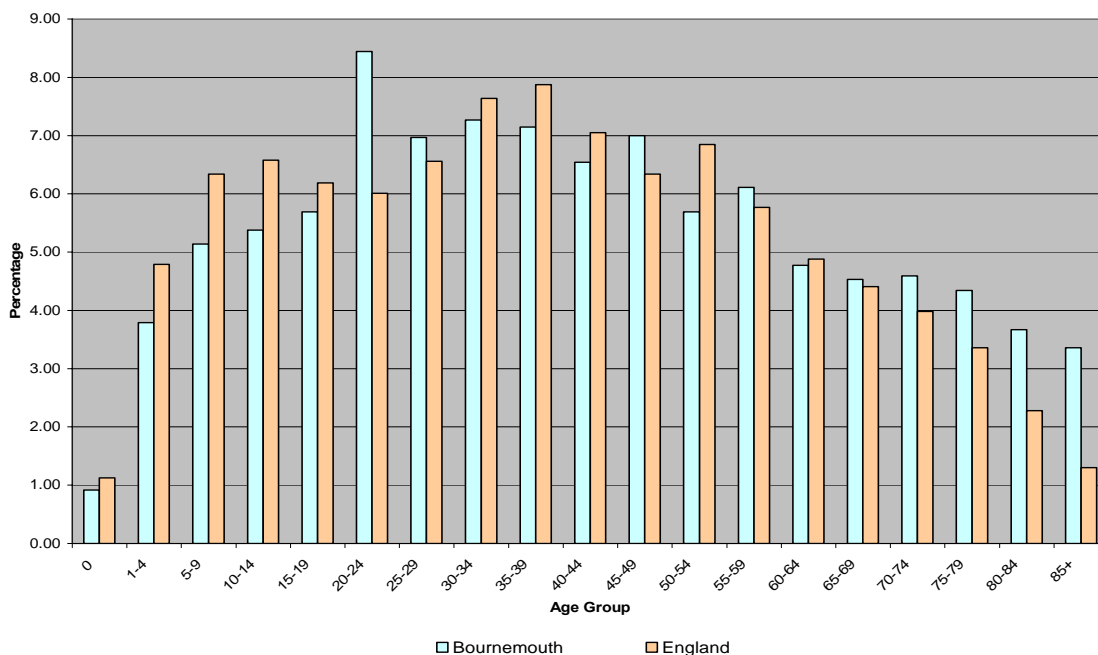
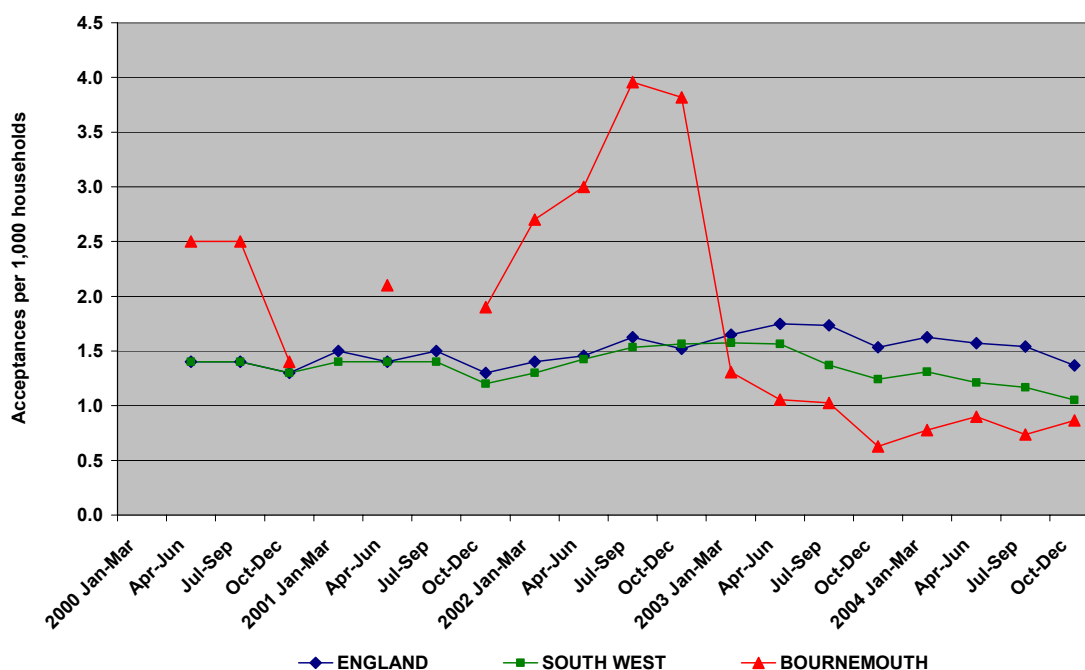


Figure 3 Households accepted as homeless between 2000 and 2004 compared with the region and England (acceptances per 1,000 households)



¹¹ Source: midyear population estimates (2004).

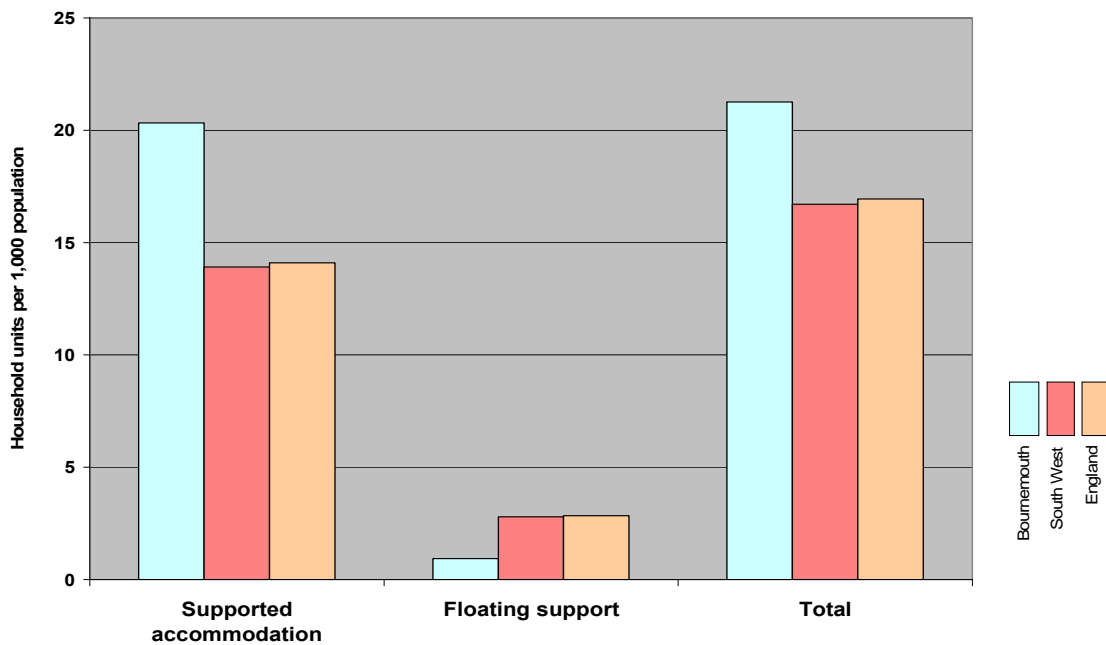
Performance information

2 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 People¹²



¹² Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM 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 England¹³

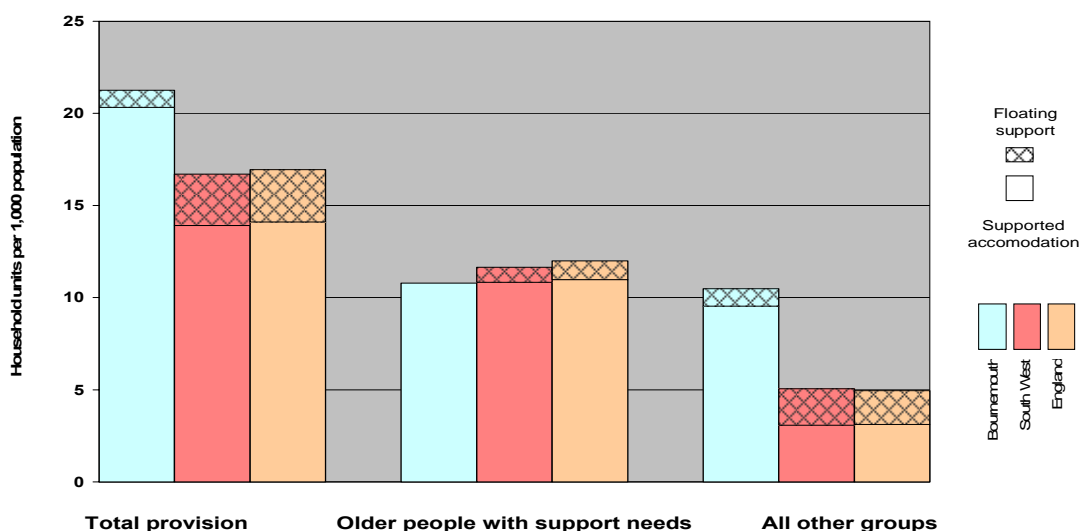
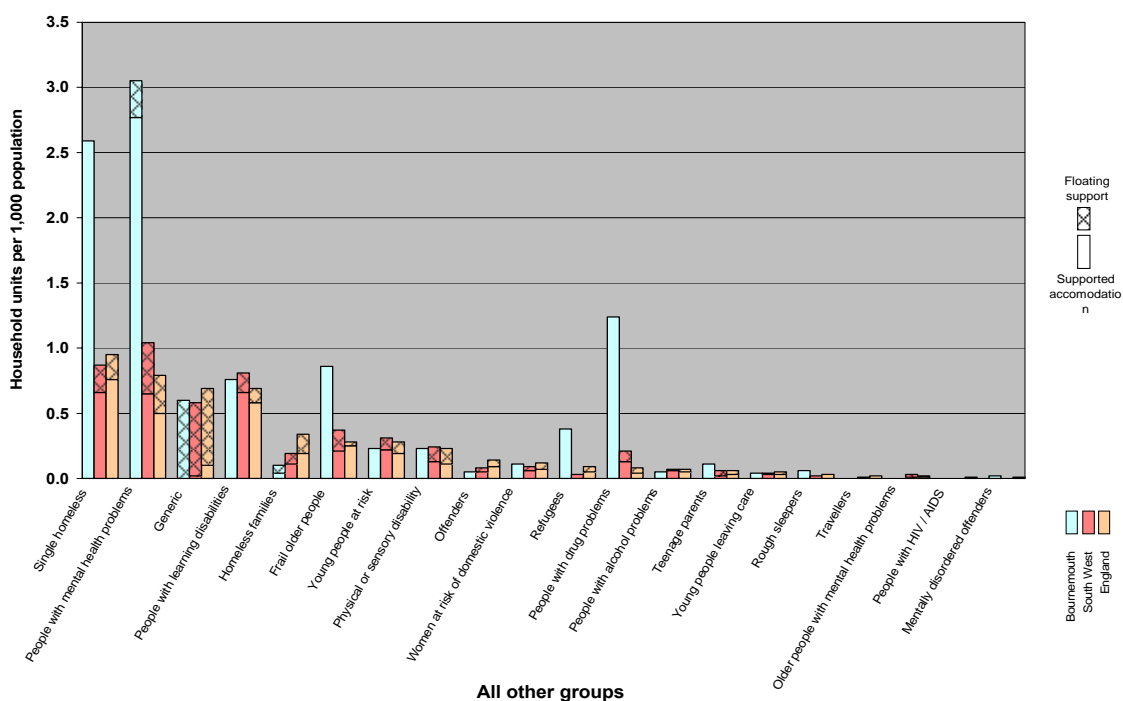


Figure 6 Services for other groups compared with the region and England¹⁴



¹³ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

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

Table 3 Funding for Supporting People¹⁵

Bournemouth	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Final Supporting People grant	£ 11,999,690	£ 12,184,921	£ 11,580,241
Pipeline allocation	£ 415,676	£ 854,186	£ -
Administration grant	£ 229,283	£ 216,811	£ 208,688

Table 4 Unit costs of Supporting People services in 2003/04 (£ per week)¹⁶

	Per head of population	Per unit	Per unit excluding community alarms	Per unit excluding community alarms and sheltered housing
Bournemouth	£ 1.41	£ 46.06	£ 46.06	£ 110.32
South West	£ 0.73	£ 33.33	£ 36.46	£ 80.42
England	£ 0.70	£ 28.30	£ 34.71	£ 76.37

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

¹⁵ Source: Grant allocations, ODPM.

¹⁶ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003.

Figure 7 Unit costs of supported accommodation compared with the region and England (labels show costs in the highest 25 per cent)¹⁷

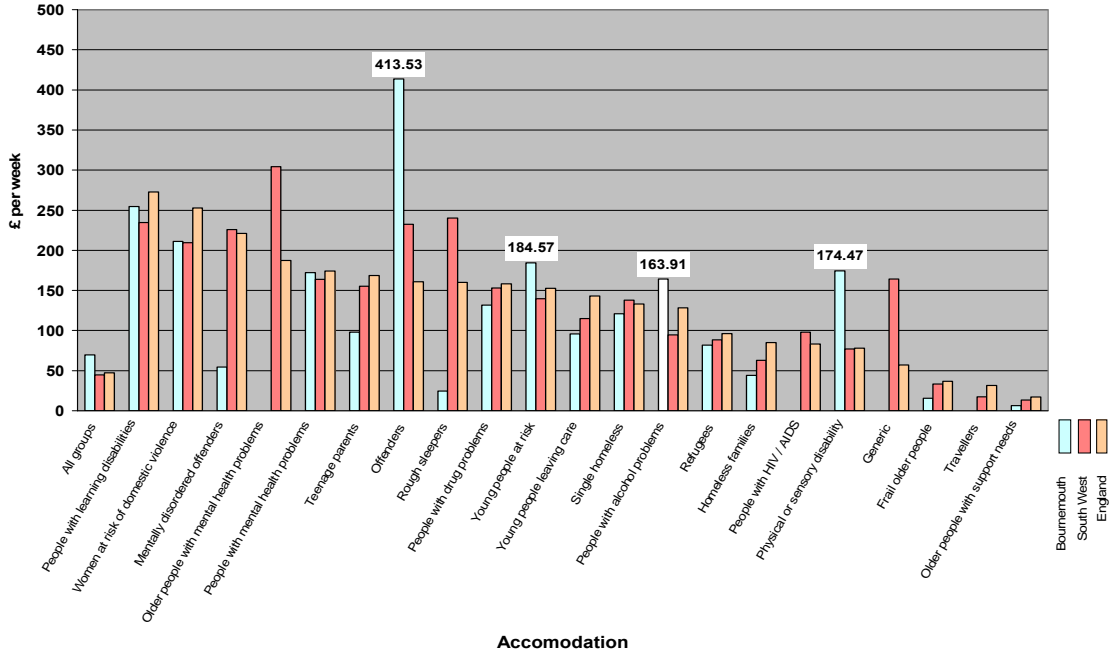
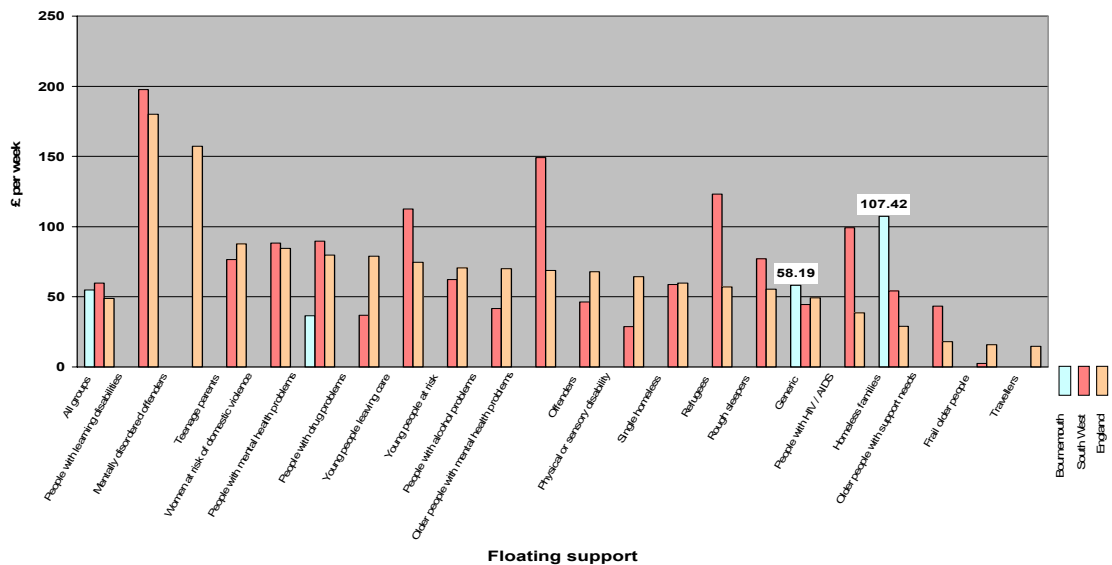


Figure 8 Unit costs of floating support services compared with the region and England (labels show costs in the highest 25 per cent)¹⁸



¹⁷ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

¹⁸ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM 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,¹⁹ all unitary councils and all English councils (2004/05)

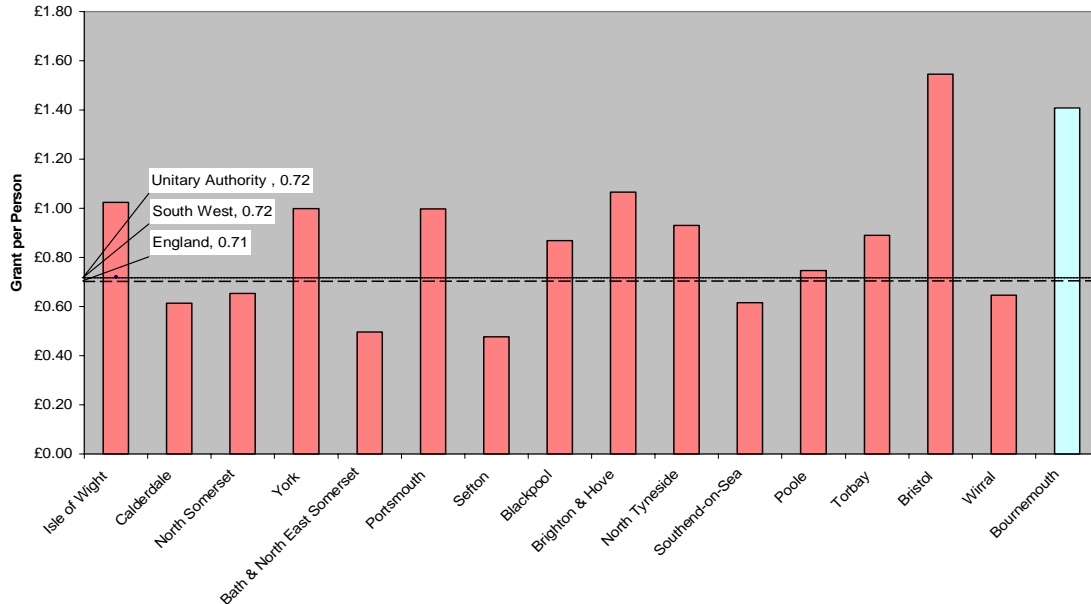
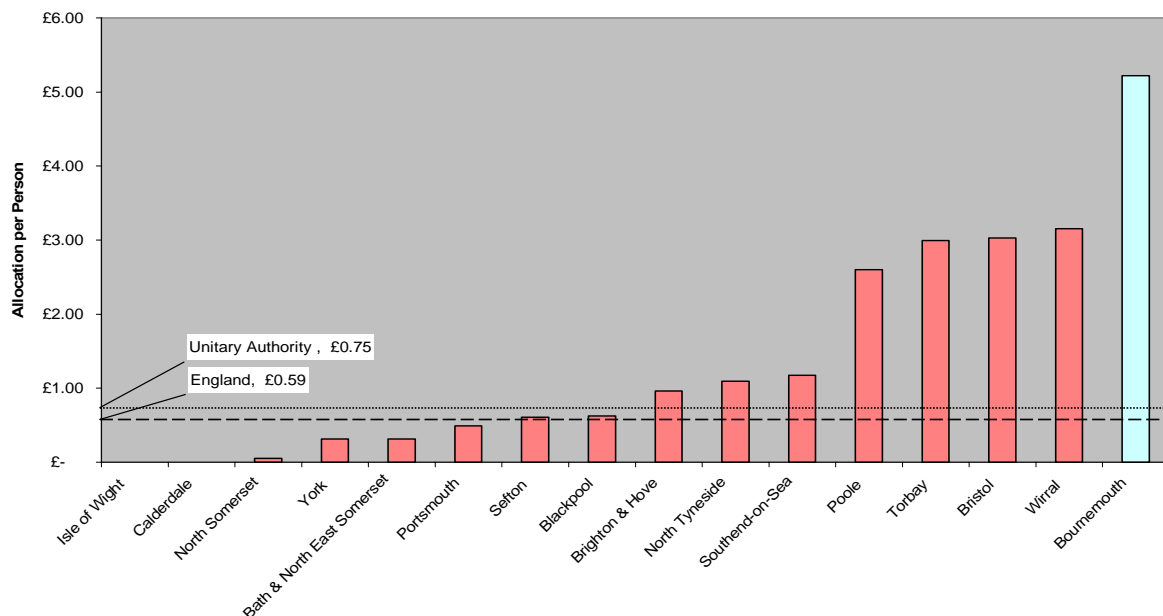


Figure 10 Pipeline allocation per head of population compared with nearest neighbours,²⁰ all unitary councils and all English councils.



¹⁹ A comparator group of similar councils.

²⁰ A comparator group of similar councils.

Figure 11 Share of spending between user groups (£000s)²¹

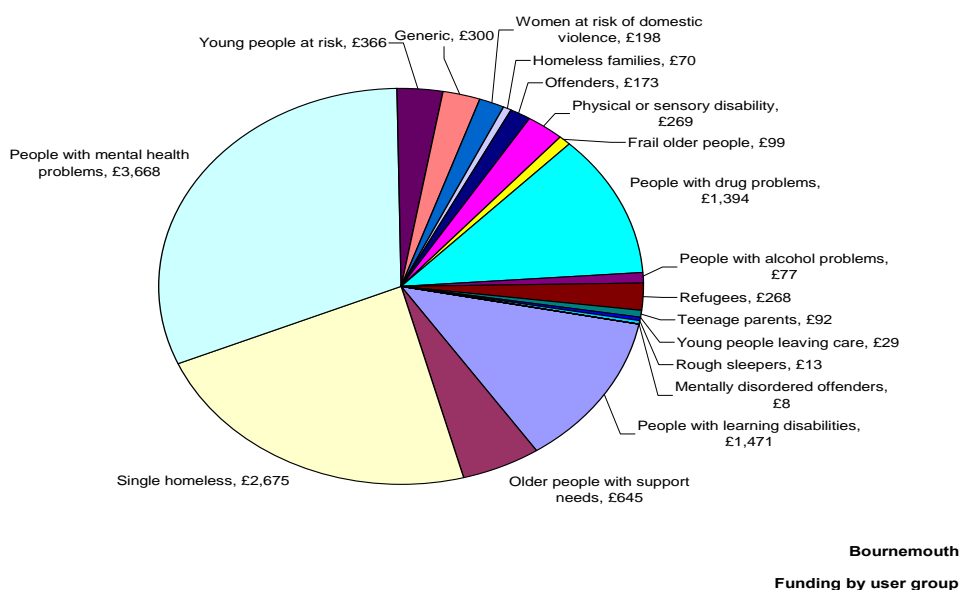
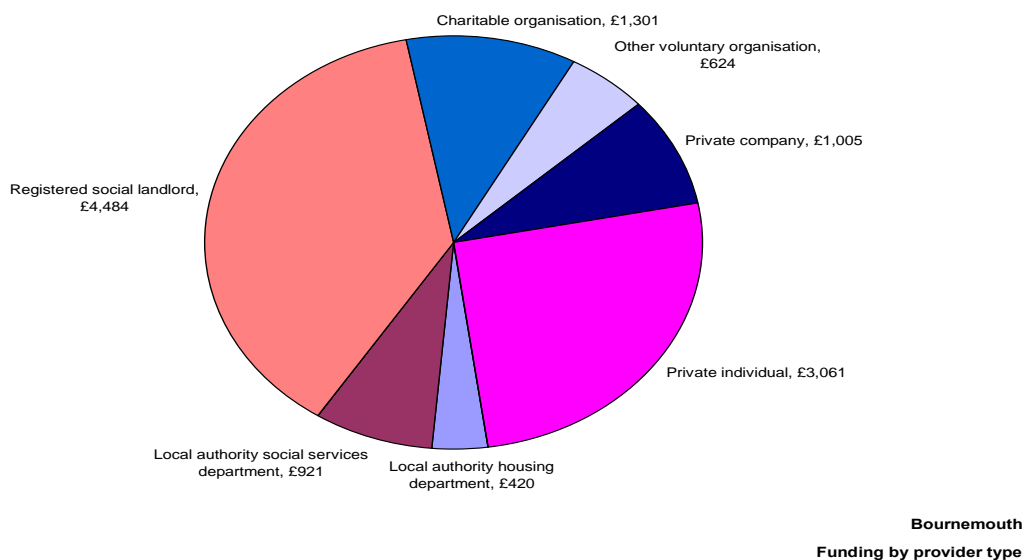


Figure 12 Share of spending between types of provider (£000s)²²



²¹ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

²² Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

Table 5 Social care star ratings November 2004

The table below shows the Commission for Social Care Inspection ratings of the Council's performance.

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

Social care performance indicators

Table 6 Performance Assessment Framework indicators 2003/04

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

Bournemouth	
Significantly above average (•••••)	Percentage change on previous year in total emergency admissions to hospital (A5) Emergency psychiatric re-admissions (A6) Adults with mental health problems helped to live at home (C31) Admissions of supported residents aged 18 to 64 to residential/nursing care (C27) Adults with physical disabilities helped to live at home (C29) Adults with learning disabilities helped to live at home (C30) Employment, education and training for care leavers (A4)
Above average (••••)	Physically disabled and sensory impaired users who said that they can contact social services easily (D58) Percentage of items of equipment and adaptations delivered within seven working days (D54)

Bournemouth	
Average (***)	Adults and older clients receiving a review as a percentage of those receiving a service (D40) Admissions of older people to residential/ nursing care (C26) Adults and older people receiving a statement of their needs and how they will be met (D39) Adults and older people receiving direct payments at 31 March per 100,000 population aged 18 or over (C51) Physically disabled and sensory impaired users who said that their opinions and preferences were always taken into account (D57)
Below average (**)	Older people helped to live at home (C32) Delayed transfers of care (D41)
Significantly below average (*)	

Best value performance indicators

Table 7 Performance on relevant indicators in 2003/04 compared with unitary councils

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

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

Appendix 2 – Reality checks undertaken

- 1 When we went on-site we carried out a number of different checks, building on the work described above, in order to get a full picture of how good the service is. These on-site reality checks were designed to gather evidence about what it is like to use the service and to see how well it works. Our reality checks included:
 - focus groups of staff, partners, providers, service users, councillors;
 - visits to services;
 - mystery shopping to access services; and
 - use of the Supporting People website.