

Inspection report

June 2004

Supporting People Programme

Leicester City Council

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Summary

Introduction to the Supporting People Programme

- 1 'Supporting People' is the government's long-term policy to enable local authorities to plan, commission and provide support services which help vulnerable people live independently. The programme went live on 1 April 2003.
- 2 The aim of the Supporting People programme is to establish a strategic, integrated policy and funding framework, delivered locally in response to identified local needs, to replace the current complex and unco-ordinated arrangements for providing housing related support services for vulnerable people.
- 3 The Supporting People programme brings together a number of 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 probation accommodation grant scheme (PAGS) into a single pot to be administered by 150 administering local authorities.

Pathfinder inspection

- 4 Leicester City Council volunteered to take part in this inspection as one of four 'pathfinders'. The purpose of this process was to trial the inspection methodology and to examine how the authority had set up and implemented the programme. The process involved inspectors carrying out an initial inspection in May 2003. Following this the council was granted a period of grace to act on the recommendations made in the draft report, presented to the council in June 2003. In February 2004, the inspection team made a reassessment of performance, updated parts of the report to reflect progress and amended the scores to reflect current performance.
- 5 Leicester City Council was inspected in the first year of the Supporting People programme. This report therefore reflects the current context for the council as it moves from implementation to the introduction of the programme and focuses on determining the effectiveness of current service delivery, the outcomes of this for vulnerable people and the prospects for future improvements.

Background

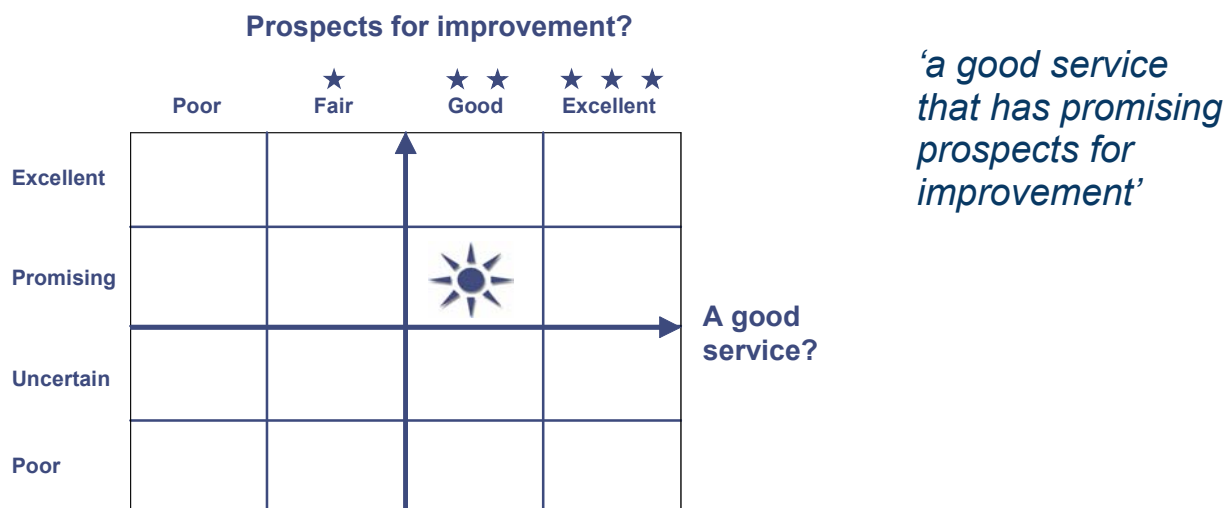
- 6 Leicester is a city in the East Midlands, with an area of 28 square miles and a population of 279,923. The city has an above average level of unemployment of 5.4 per cent and is ranked as the 35th most deprived council area out of 354 in England. 13 of its electoral wards are among the 10 per cent most deprived nationally.
- 7 It is one of the most diverse communities in England, with a 30 per cent black and minority ethnic population expected to rise to 50 per cent by 2010. The largest group is of Asian/Asian British people. It is a designated cluster area for dispersal of asylum seekers and an estimated 52 different languages are spoken in the city.
- 8 The May 2003 election was the first change of political power in the city for 24 years. This resulted in no party having overall control and a council made up of 54 councillors, of which 25 are Liberal Democrat, 20 Labour and 9 Conservative. An alliance was formed between the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives.

9 The council will receive a Supporting People grant of £17.1 million in 2003/04. It will also receive an administration grant of £248,518.

Scoring the service

10 We have assessed the council as providing a 'good', two-star service that has promising prospects for improvement. Our judgements are based on the evidence obtained during the inspection and are outlined below.

Scoring chart¹: Leicester City Council - Supporting People Programme



What works well

- 11 During our inspection we found a number of positive features in the way that the Supporting People programme has been implemented to date. These include:
- ◆ a considerable growth in housing related support services backed up with evidence of need among most of the identified vulnerable groups covered by Supporting People funding;
 - ◆ service users have been consulted, and in the case of the floating support to tenants and residents, have influenced the shape of the service;
 - ◆ a clear role for service users in the review of services and to date approximately 200 service users have been interviewed and contributed to this process;
 - ◆ Supporting People partners are well briefed and there has been effective support provided by the team to service providers;
 - ◆ partnerships are generally working well and the Supporting People team is aware where more work is required to make sure that partnerships are effective and sustainable;
 - ◆ there are clear and ambitious aims for housing related support services through a clear plan for developing and delivering a five year strategy in response to identified needs and with the engagement of most partners;

¹ The scoring chart displays performance in two dimensions. The horizontal axis shows how good the service or function is now, on a scale ranging from no stars for a service that is poor (at the left-hand end) to three stars for an excellent service (right-hand end). The vertical axis shows the improvement prospects of the service, also on a four-point scale.

- ◆ there is a clear vision for the Supporting People programme that is consistent with the council's allied strategies and plans;
- ◆ the assessment of the risks surrounding the implementation of the programme has been well thought out and documented;
- ◆ the IT system was implemented on time and within budget and consequently payments have been made at agreed levels and on time to providers;
- ◆ the council has established the commissioning body and the core strategy group in accordance with Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) guidance;
- ◆ a charging policy is in place, a timetable for service reviews is agreed and implemented and the council has established a strong Supporting People team; and
- ◆ service providers express confidence in the ability of the Supporting People team to deliver the programme.

Areas for improvement

- 12 However, we found a number of weaknesses with the Supporting People programme that need to be addressed. These include:
- ◆ the quality of information about some vulnerable groups, in particular travellers, is poor although this is starting to be addressed;
 - ◆ service users do not influence the strategy nor have they been closely involved in the development of the service review and monitoring programme;
 - ◆ the commissioning body needs to develop a clearer vision of the shape of future services, complete the work on a more transparent decision making process for funding decisions and an agreed conflict resolution process; and
 - ◆ the contribution and benefits of the Supporting People programme need to be clearly reflected in the strategies and plans of the health service providers.

What works well

- 13 We have judged that the Supporting People programme has promising prospects for delivering further improvements because:
- ◆ there is high level commitment within and outside of the council to Supporting People;
 - ◆ a strong and pragmatic focus based around the national project plan for Supporting People has ensured that the most important actions have been implemented;
 - ◆ the Supporting People team is committed and brings with it a strong body of experience in different services;
 - ◆ the council has shown itself capable of addressing some difficult issues, such as the need to make £22 million of savings since local government reorganisation;
 - ◆ there is a performance management system in place and councillors are involved in monitoring progress;
 - ◆ difficult decisions have also been made in the field of supported housing, such as the closure of a women's hostel as a result of low demand for this service; and

- ◆ the council has an excellent track record in previous housing inspections and ratings for its housing strategies.

Areas for improvement

14 There are, however, some areas in which the council needs to improve:

- ◆ user involvement is critical if the council is able to demonstrate that it will be delivering the services and improvements that people need; and
- ◆ the high level commitment of partners to Supporting People has yet to be translated into the partners plans and strategies.

Recommendations

- 15 To rise to the challenge of continuous improvement, councils need inspection reports that offer practical pointers for improvement. In this context, the inspection team makes the following recommendations.
- 16 Our recommendations for the service are that it should:
- ◆ ensure users are involved in setting service standards and targets for improvements, clearly identifying outcomes for service users;
 - ◆ establish high priority and monitored goals to more strongly influence primary care trust (PCT) involvement in the programme and aid the understanding of the contribution it can make to the health agenda,
 - ◆ seek agreement to practical arrangements that will ensure all partners are able to attend meetings;
 - ◆ work with health to ensure that the benefits and outcomes of the Supporting People programme feature in the relevant partner strategies and plans and identify relevant user outcomes as a result of the shared vision;
 - ◆ identify, agree and develop shared performance indicators (PIs) and targets with PCT's, probation and cross–authority organisations as well as with providers in public, private and voluntary sectors;
 - ◆ establish an agreed conflict resolution process to enable the commissioning body to develop a clearer shared vision of future services and a more transparent decision making process for funding decisions; and
 - ◆ carry out further work to capture information that will determine the need for cross authority working to develop specialist services and meet the needs of people who may need to access services across administering authority areas.
- 17 We would like to thank the users and the providers of Supporting People services and the staff of Leicester City Council, the probation and health services, who gave up their time and met our requests efficiently and courteously.

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Report

Context

The locality

- 18 Leicester is a city in the East Midlands, with an area of 28 square miles and a population of 279,923². Manufacturing is the largest source of employment in the city, employing 23.4 per cent of the workforce compared with 14.96 per cent for England and Wales.
- 19 The city has an above average level of unemployment of 5.4 per cent and is ranked as the 35th most deprived council area out of 354 in England. 13 of its electoral wards are among the 10 per cent most deprived nationally.
- 20 Leicester is one of the most diverse communities in England, with a 30 per cent black and minority ethnic population expected to rise to 50 per cent by 2010. The largest group is of Asian/Asian British people who account for a quarter of the total population. The population of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs is well in excess of the average for England. The city is a designated cluster area for dispersal of asylum seekers and an estimated 52 different languages are spoken.
- 21 The local population is slightly younger than the population of England as a whole, with 67 per cent of the population aged below 45 compared to 62 per cent in England³. The size of the population fell very slightly, by 0.5 per cent, between 1991 and 2001. There are three hospitals and one prison located in the city.
- 22 In housing terms there are 116,000 dwellings, of which there are relatively low levels of home ownership (62 per cent) and high levels of all forms of renting. Key housing features are the high levels of overcrowding in some of the more deprived wards and growing numbers of people on the housing register.

The Council

- 23 The council has adopted a leader and cabinet model of local government, with Supporting People issues decisions considered primarily by the social care and health scrutiny committee and the cabinet.
- 24 Our initial pathfinder inspection coincided with the first change of political power in the city for 24 years. The May 2003 elections resulted in no party having overall control and a council made up of 54 councillors, of which 25 are Liberal Democrat, 20 Labour and 9 Conservative. An alliance was formed between the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives during the time we were on site.

Supporting People – ODPM framework for delivery

- 25 The ODPM has set out the following structural arrangements for the development and delivery of the Supporting People programme:
- ◆ Accountable officer and the Supporting People team: drives the whole process.

² Source: 2001 census details on Leicester City Council website.

³ Source: 2001 census details on Leicester City Council website.

- ◆ 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.
 - ◆ Elected members: approve key decisions of the commissioning body.
 - ◆ Supporting People team: delivers the local programme.
- 26 Supporting People commissioning bodies are a requirement under grant conditions and must have senior representation from the administering local authority (ALA), the local health services, one representative from each primary care trust, and the area probation service. In two tier ALAs each district council is entitled to one representative. Each named organisation has one vote although the ALA has a veto where it can demonstrate a financial risk to the ALA.

Supporting People – housing related Support Services in Leicester

Management Arrangements

- 27 The Supporting People team is part of the housing department. The team has 14 staff reporting to the Supporting People manager. The team is structured into 2 working groups, planning and commissioning and business and finance.
- 28 The Supporting People team has successfully met each of the key milestones set by the ODPM as part of the national performance monitoring arrangements. The budget available in the current year meets the funding requirements of existing services.
- 29 The team reports to the service director for hostels and housing within the housing department. The Supporting People accountable officer is the director of social care and health.

Strategy

- 30 The ODPM required all Supporting People administering local authorities to submit a shadow strategy in the autumn of 2002. The shadow strategies were required to demonstrate a clear vision and strategic steer for the programme and to set out the map of existing housing related support provision.
- 31 The shadow strategy sets out the context for Supporting People in Leicester and provides guidance as to the intentions of the programme in the first year of operation, from April 2003. The ODPM assessed the Supporting People shadow strategy as excellent. This reflected the inclusiveness and accessibility of the strategy.
- 32 The ODPM requires all administering authorities to produce a five year strategy by March 2005. The council will use the work it undertook in the production of the shadow strategy as the basis for this but has identified additional work that will be required to secure contributions from all partners, including service users, and to provide a firm basis from which to direct the programme through to 2010.

Services and budget

- 33 Within Leicester there are an estimated 7602 recipients of housing related support services, including those who are privately funded. Of these, the vast majority (74 per cent) are services for older people, with the next largest group

being single homeless people who make up 7 per cent. There are 12 other types of service provided, of which 7 per cent are described as 'generic' and 3 per cent are for people with mental health problems.

- 34 Individual claims vary from £2.30 to £610 per week. Leicester's profile conforms to the national picture identified through the ODPM's own analysis.

Estimated supply of housing related support services, July 2003 (source: Leicester City Council)

| Primary Client Group | Units of Support |
|--|-------------------------|
| Single Homeless | 584 |
| Generic | 509 |
| Homeless Families | 143 |
| Older People | 5619 |
| Domestic Violence | 106 |
| People with Mental Health problems | 213 |
| People with Learning Disabilities | 98 |
| Offenders or people at risk of offending | 81 |
| People with drug problems | 55 |
| People with alcohol problems | 0 |
| Refugees | 37 |
| Young People Leaving Care/at risk | 36 |
| Teenage Parents | 23 |
| Physical/Sensory Disabilities | 83 |
| HIV/AIDS | 15 |
| Total | 7602 |

- 35 The council will receive a Supporting People grant of £17.1 million in 2003/04 to pay for the costs of housing related support services. This includes £192,026 for new services funded through pipeline bids.
- 36 The administration grant awarded to the council by the ODPM to assist in the costs of implementing, delivering and managing the programme is £248,518 for 2003/04.
- 37 Leicester City Council volunteered to take part in this inspection as one of four 'pathfinders'. The purpose of this process was to test both the way the inspections would be carried out and to examine how the authority had set up and implemented the programme.
- 38 The agreement for taking part in this process was that the council would be inspected in May 2003 and would then have a period of grace to act on the recommendations made in the draft report presented to the council in June 2003. In February 2004, the inspection team made a reassessment of performance, updated the report to reflect progress and amended the scores if significant progress had been made.

How good is the service?

Are the aims clear and challenging?

- 39 Inspectors look to see how a council has agreed the key aims for the service being inspected, how clear these aims are to the people that receive the service and whether these reflect the corporate aims of the organisation as a whole.

- 40 Challenge is the key to achieving significant improvements in performance and targets set by the council and the government. It requires the council to consider and demonstrate how a service contributes to its wider corporate aims and community plans.

Supporting People Shadow Strategy

- 41 The overall vision contained within Leicester's Supporting People shadow strategy is 'to deliver high quality, joined up and cost effective housing related support services for the full range of vulnerable people. Housing related support services will enable vulnerable people to maintain and sustain a home in the community and will assist people to retain independence and choice in their lives, promoting social inclusion and preventing crisis interventions'.
- 42 Overall, we consider that the Supporting People shadow strategy is a well written document, which sets out ambitious aims for support services in Leicester. These are reflected corporately at the very highest level, with a public service agreement to develop services that promote the independence of older and disabled people. There are strong and consistent links between the Supporting People shadow strategy and housing strategies, the crime and disorder strategy and the youth justice plan.
- 43 Examples of consistent and high level aims are:

'The city should be: inclusive and tolerant... regenerated... healthy and sustainable...' - **Leicester Partnership's Vision.**

'Key priorities are diversity, community safety.health and social care... regeneration...' - **Leicester Community Plan.**

'To develop services to promote the independence of older and disabled people' - **Public Service Agreement Target.**

'To prioritise the housing and support needs of black and minority ethnic communities by ensuring that they are reflected in associated policies strategies and programmes of the City Council and its partners' - **Objective 6 of the Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy.**

- 44 Specific goals include:
- ◆ ensure a decent home is within the reach of every citizen;
 - ◆ continue to improve support to individuals suffering and/or surviving domestic violence;
 - ◆ improve support to victims of racial harassment;
 - ◆ develop and improve local health and social care services; and
 - ◆ develop services to promote the independence of older and disabled people.
- 45 A fundamental weakness is the level of involvement of service users in setting the aims and priorities within the strategy. Their involvement needs to be given careful consideration in the preparations and development of the five year Supporting People strategy that is due to be submitted to the ODPM in March 2005.
- 46 The Supporting People programme is integrated into various strategies such as the learning disability housing strategy, the mental health strategy and is reflected in the user information charter better care: higher standards.

- 47 In the health development plan references are limited to people with learning disabilities, refugees and the homelessness health programme. There are no references in the local delivery plans of the primary care trusts. These could be strengthened by identifying how support services can help to reduce poor health. For example, helping older owner occupiers to improve the heating, insulation standards and the security of their homes can result in improved health, reduce hospital stays and delayed discharges of patients from hospital.
- 48 The commissioning body also needs to identify how the aims in support of the Supporting People shadow strategy - 'quality services', 'services that meet needs', 'working together', 'accessible services', 'accountable services', 'sustainable services' and 'inclusive consultation' - translate into specific service standards and targets that are communicated to and understood by service users.

Does the service meet these aims?

Commissioning services to meet local needs

- 49 Having considered the aims the council has set for the service, inspectors make an assessment of how well the council is performing in meeting these aims. This includes an assessment of performance against specific service standards and targets and the council's approach to measuring whether it is actually delivering what it sets out to do.
- 50 The assessment was based upon the following five key issues:
- ◆ progress with implementation;
 - ◆ partnership working;
 - ◆ risk assessment and contingency planning;
 - ◆ planning for service provider review and monitoring; and
 - ◆ outcomes for vulnerable people.

Progress with Implementation

- 51 The Supporting People team has focused strongly on getting systems in place in time for Supporting People going 'live' on 1 April 2003. They have successfully done so and as a result, have already achieved a 'steady state' for both service users and providers. The new IT system has been implemented on time and within budget and the arrangements for paying providers has worked well.
- 52 The growth of housing related support services has been supported by research into the needs of the community. The research concluded that although there was a range of well developed good quality housing related support services for almost every client group, there were a number of needs for which no services existed and some gaps within existing services. There is a systematic group by group analysis within the Supporting People shadow strategy, including the mapping of services for which no public subsidy is provided.
- 53 The analysis has helped the Supporting People team to develop new services to fill any gaps. We were advised that although there are no specialist schemes for alcoholics, this group is able to access other services, such as the generic service and services for drug users. Even so this has been identified as a gap.
- 54 The council has made good use of a range of sources of information on need. There is strong evidence in respect of many groups, including homeless people, people with a learning disability, people with mental health problems, offenders or people at risk of offending, people with a physical or sensory disability and

substance abusers. The women's health in prostitution project is a good example of action research into a specific group.

- 55 The evidence is more impressionistic in terms of black and minority ethnic groups, people with HIV/AIDS, refugees and pregnant teenagers. This uncertainty around needs has been instrumental in the funding of research into the needs of pregnant teenagers and older people. The Supporting People team has also been working with the Gypsy and Traveller policy officer to gather better needs information.
- 56 A systematic analysis of the demand for existing services would add to the depth of the council's knowledge. It is stated that there are high void rates in sheltered housing, but it is not clear how great the sustained demand is for other services, such as the two supported housing schemes for teenage parents. The council has tried to find out more about the nature of cross-authority services, by distributing a survey form devised by the ODPM, but this did not yield any useful information so another way of tracking the demand for cross-authority services needs to be identified in order to inform the future Supporting People strategy.
- 57 Small and large providers were satisfied with the level of support that they had received from the Supporting People team. Large providers have the advantage of additional internal sources of advice and training, but the council is providing support to small providers to ensure that they too are prepared.
- 58 The commissioning body has agreed a charging policy based upon the government's 'fairer charging' guidance and the number of outstanding transitional housing benefit (THB) claims, at around 400 out of 11,000 at the time of our inspection, is low. This level of performance has been achieved despite a large number of last minute claims submitted prior to the end of the THB system on 31 March 2003.
- 59 The council has issued 114 contracts and all of these are now signed.
- 60 'A sustainable and effective Supporting People infrastructure' was one of the aims of the shadow strategy. The focus on systems has meant that the decision making framework, while working, still needs further refinement. The inclusive forum and core strategy development group have met regularly, however, the commissioning body has only begun meeting separately within the last year.
- 61 The commissioning body's ability to make difficult decisions may soon be compromised by the lack of an agreed conflict resolution process. These difficult decisions include such things as:
- ◆ the creation of a clear hierarchy of priorities to replace the current multiplicity of identified priorities; and
 - ◆ making clear recommendations about the future and shape of existing services informed by and with reference to, the agreed priorities.
- 62 At present it is not clear to councillors and other stakeholders what the process is for rationalising a long list of priorities. The council will also need to demonstrate that it is reviewing and monitoring its own internally provided services in the same way as those provided by external service providers.

Partnership Working

- 63 'Improving and developing services in partnership' is one of the council's aims. Overall we found strengths in the top level commitment to Supporting People within all of the groups of stakeholders with whom the council work, with the council's director of social care and health attending the majority of the top level groups.

- 64 The Supporting People team has taken a pragmatic approach to the use of existing forums to develop these partnerships, as well as supporting provider groups for whom there was no suitable forum. There are particularly strong working relationships with the council, providers and the probation service.
- 65 Another of the seven aims of the shadow strategy is 'inclusivity through consultation and engagement'. The Supporting People team relies upon providers to consult with users with some success, but needs to develop a direct relationship with users, non-users and socially excluded groups. Tenants and resident groups are one means of accessing these and work in this respect is being undertaken. Among providers, particularly the council's in house and contracted homelessness services, there are some good examples of consultation from which the team could learn.
- 66 The top level commitment of health service managers is being diverted by the late development of primary care trusts in Leicester and 'an over riding focus on hospital waiting lists'. The sheer number of planning forums has been seen as an obstacle by most of those to whom we spoke.
- 67 There is insufficient emphasis upon cross-authority working at present. Since Leicester is perceived to be a magnet for people in neighbouring districts and for refugees who have been granted permission to remain in the United Kingdom, it is important that the council works in partnership with its neighbours to understand and address the impact of this. Although a cross authority group has been established it has been unable to progress work on issues due to other pressures on the programme.
- 68 The focus of meetings involving service users has so far been primarily to disseminate information. There is limited user involvement within the existing planning forums; we could not detect any evidence of users influencing the shadow strategy except for tenant involvement with the STAR (supporting tenants and residents) floating support service. The distinct identity of the service and its separation from the housing management function were, we were told, a result of the influence of tenants.
- 69 The approach taken to consultation via providers has led to some positive outcomes. Service providers consulted a range of hard to reach groups, women fleeing domestic violence, black and minority ethnic groups, pregnant teenagers, single homeless people, homeless families and young people. We were told that the approach has also led to improved contact between the providers and users, a greater awareness of what is now available and, as one service user stated:

'Knowing someone would help them get the benefits or services they wanted or needed'. - Service user.

- 70 Some of the mechanisms that already exist within the probation service, such as annual user surveys, suggestion boxes and user forums provide examples that the council could learn from.
- 71 Specific concerns expressed to us during our service user focus groups included an apparent lack of written information in different languages. Interpreters are employed by service providers, but although the council has produced and distributed some leaflets in minority languages to providers, they had clearly not been distributed effectively by the providers. The Supporting People team advised us that it requires providers to produce translations as a condition of funding.
- 72 The partnership with service providers is more developed and considered a strength by the Supporting People team. We were able to attend groups set up by all providers as well as a small providers group. Supporting People was cited

as the specific reason for the establishment of a providers group for organisations focusing on black and minority ethnic needs. The members of each group understood that their role was to keep others informed and did not feel they were in the group solely to represent their own interests. We were told that enquiries from individual organisations were handled promptly and there was a generally held view that the Supporting People team had:

'Done everything they could to help us make the transition from the former to the current funding process'. - Comment of service provider.

- 73 Although the team has provided regular briefings to all provider groups, small providers do not feel that they have the resources and experience to understand the detail of Supporting People. This will make it difficult for them to demonstrate the business case for particular services and understand the market well through benchmarking activity. This is an issue that the council has started to address through specific training provided by South Leicester College and by providing one to one support for very small providers.
- 74 Advocacy groups, especially providers of services for black and minority ethnic groups are able to obtain sufficient information from the Supporting People team to convey up to date and timely information to their members. Many also commented that the team was always willing to listen to their concerns and to take action if necessary. However, even within this group there were a small number who felt things could have been done better by the team, such as providing information in other languages.
- 75 We found that there is a good awareness of the Supporting People agenda within social services at a senior level, but the involvement of commissioners of services and frontline staff is inconsistent. The absence of an older people's strategy has led, as one interviewee put it, 'to service developments proceeding at a very sedate pace'. However, since the inspection, the council has moved on this issue and an external consultant is in the process of being recruited to complete this strategy.
- 76 The partnership with the probation service is also well established. There is high level representation of the service on the commissioning board and core strategy development group, with the service considering itself treated as an 'equal partner'. Managers of the probation service feel that there is a good relationship with the housing department. The strength of the relationship has resulted in a 'high-risk floating support' scheme and information sharing protocol for ex-offenders. The youth justice service described 'excellent working relationships at both the strategic and operational level with the housing department'.
- 77 The council has been awarded beacon council status for its homelessness service and a feature of the service that received praise was the 'exceptionally strong relationships with the health sector'. These have led to the creation of an outreach team of health professionals for homeless people and a hospital discharge protocol. Strong support was expressed for Supporting People by the senior health service managers that we met. As one stated:

'It is a means of ensuring that a greater number of people will receive the services they need'. - Senior Health Service Manager.

- 78 There is a recognition that Supporting People offers an opportunity to build on the success of the homelessness service for other marginalised groups, but the creation of the two primary care trusts serving Leicester and a further trust taking the lead on mental health and learning disability, has taken a great deal of energy away from this. This has manifested itself in low attendance by the trusts on the consultation and decision making bodies. As one interviewee put it:

'We have the will. The challenge is to convert the good will into achievement'. - Primary Care Trust representative.

- 79 The degree of partnership with neighbouring councils is not yet well developed, although we did find evidence of good cross-authority partnership that is working to solve important issues and provide knowledge and support to individual members. The focus of the work is currently on the processes that need to be in place, rather than customer oriented outcomes at present.
- 80 The information that the Supporting People team has collected on need has been 'extremely useful' to the regeneration team. There has been a long history of regeneration work in Leicester through the single regeneration budget and the neighbourhood renewal scheme, with both budgets helping to fund the expansion of floating support prior to the creation of Supporting People.

Risk Assessment & Contingency Planning

- 81 Overall we consider that the council has taken an effective approach to risk management.
- 82 There is a comprehensive, corporate approach to the risk of IT failure. The internal audit has monitored successful implementation and presence of contingency arrangements and there has been regular monitoring of risk by the IT project board. The council corporately backs up data on to tapes every night and these tapes are then stored securely off site.
- 83 Work with small providers on risk management and contingency planning is positive. The council recognises the risk that small providers face in areas such as insurance premiums and as this is currently viewed as being one of the most likely reasons for a provider to fail, they are working with them to minimise the risk of this. The Supporting People team recognises the need to treat smaller providers with a light touch, while protecting the interests of service users.
- 84 Delays and changes of direction by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) are cited by the council as risks that have been addressed. When the Supporting People programme was originally devised a timetable and project plan was produced by the ODPM for local government. A performance monitoring system has been used by the ODPM to monitor the progress of each administering local authority according to the project plan. In some cases, such as a national charging policy, the ODPM has responded to feedback and left councils to introduce their own policies. In others, such as the calculation of grants to service providers and the methods used to identify need, the ODPM has reached the view that this is not possible on a national basis and passed over the responsibility to local authorities. There has also been a delay in the production of guidance on service reviews. In each instance the council has had to make its own alternative arrangements at the expense of other activities, such as direct consultation with users.
- 85 During May 2003, two key areas of risk were identified. These were concerns about the ability of the team to carry out the reviews of services and the need to investigate potential support for the team from its partners. By February 2004, both of these areas had been addressed. A review 'toolkit' has been developed and other agencies and partners will provide specific client support. Partners were not able to provide additional support to the team so the council has released resources to fund an additional three posts.

Planning for Service Provider Review & Monitoring

- 86 'Ensuring affordable and adaptable housing related support services' was one of the aims of the shadow strategy. This reflects the council's first corporate aim 'to develop quality services through effective monitoring'.
- 87 The approach to the review and monitoring of services was at an early stage when we inspected in May 2003. This is in line with the national project plan for Supporting People. A timetable for the review of all services has been agreed and this sensibly places the highest cost and most recently developed services in the first tranche of reviews.
- 88 We found that the Supporting People team are taking a robust approach to the reviews and the breadth of experience within the team is serving it well. We noted that the findings of the council's best value review of the homelessness service have been used to inform the Supporting People shadow strategy and plans for the five year strategy, and this demonstrates that there is joined up thinking and learning taking place.
- 89 In May 2003, a weakness around the sheltered housing service was identified. It was clear to the Inspection team that the service is very outdated. The council is undertaking superficial improvements to some of the properties, but according to the housing revenue account business plan 'at present there is very little demand for sheltered accommodation'. The opportunity to enhance the standard of support and care in some schemes and to consider a change of use or decommissioning of the most unpopular schemes has been taken and two schemes have been decommissioned. The service reviews of sheltered units will start in April 2004.
- 90 A comprehensive toolkit has been developed for the service reviews and this is available to providers on a CD, in hard copy and can be accessed through the Supporting People pages on the council's website. We were impressed with the toolkit as a practical and helpful guide to the process.

Outcomes for Vulnerable People

Access to Information & Services for Service Users & Potential Customers

- 91 We found mixed levels of awareness of the housing related support services funded through Supporting People among service users. In some schemes, such as the night shelter and the YMCA, residents were aware of the total cost of the service and the separation of support charges. There was less awareness among the sheltered housing tenants that we met.
- 92 Tenants as a whole were less aware of the meaning of 'Supporting People', but, more importantly, were aware of the existence of the STAR scheme that it funds. There was some concern that if certain funding partnerships were to disappear, services would be lost. There was also a widely held perception that if users were not tenants they would not be able to access floating support services.
- 93 The Supporting People team has produced a range of leaflets to raise awareness. We found the leaflet on the STAR Scheme to be well distributed in the council's offices. General advice leaflets on the Supporting People programme have been sent out to all service users and a number of these are available in community languages from small provider groups, but none of the users that we met had seen them.
- 94 The Supporting People pages on the council's website have been developed since the inspection, they are easy to access and contain information about the services and links to other sources of information. These pages have been

accessed by providers and users who have used the 'contact us' facility to raise queries about the service.

Diversity

- 95 It is clear that the council as a whole is committed to celebrating the diversity of the Leicester population and meeting their needs. Consequently Supporting People is itself a high priority, rather than a peripheral activity, since minority and excluded groups are much more likely to be in need of housing related support services.
- 96 The Supporting People team has taken the pragmatic step of consulting hard to reach groups through service providers. This is positive, but it still needs to find ways of identifying and reaching those who would be eligible, but do not access services. Service users are also represented on the health and social care planning groups and so this too provides an opportunity to consult.
- 97 It has already been noted that the council has a sound basis of information about the needs of most groups, but that the shadow strategy has not collected together all of the available information. Consequently for some groups the information was weak. There is also a need for more detailed information about the support needs of each group. This is an area that requires further attention within the five year strategy.
- 98 The black and minority ethnic population are targeted for assistance in the various strategies and this has resulted in a growth in actual services, such as the housing for 18 people of black and minority ethnic origin with mental health problems and floating support for refugees. Access to services would be improved if the advice leaflets that the council prints in community languages were better distributed, since, as previously noted, none of the service users that we spoke to were aware of the leaflets.
- 99 The supply of housing related support for physically disabled people is recognised to be in short supply and, where it does exist, in need of modernisation. The council's plans include an increase in investment in adaptations to meet the needs of people with a physical disability and speeding up of the application process. The expansion of floating support represents a change in the way in which services will be provided, moving away from the nursing home model.
- 100 Many of the services for minority groups are managed by small providers and the council has recognised the need to provide additional help to these organisations.

Outcomes for Service Users

- 101 The Supporting People programme went 'live' on 1 April 2003 and there has been a great deal of emphasis upon a 'steady state' for the first year. In light of this we would not expect to see major changes in frontline services. Even so, it is clear that the Supporting People team and service providers have grasped the opportunity to expand the range of housing related support services using transitional housing benefit. The council's housing benefits officers estimate that there has been a growth of £3.6 million in spending on housing related support services in Leicester.
- 102 Clearly it will be important for the council to be able to demonstrate the sustained demand for and the quality, value for money and cost effectiveness of these new services through the early application of a robust service review and monitoring process.
- 103 The visible results of this are growth in the following floating support services:

- ◆ low level generic support to 500 council tenants and 10 housing association tenants in order to sustain their tenancies (the 'STAR' service);
- ◆ for 60 council tenants with drug misuse problems;
- ◆ for approximately 100 council tenants who have previously been long-term homeless;
- ◆ for 16 people with mental health problems;
- ◆ for 60 refugees;
- ◆ for the former residents of the Gorse Hill and Community Home and five additional people with learning disabilities;
- ◆ for 20 ex-offenders, including 5 high-risk offenders; and
- ◆ for people living with HIV/AIDS.

104 Accommodation based services that have been developed are:

- ◆ support to 20 households in dispersed hostels and supported housing units for homeless people;
- ◆ new supported housing for 18 people of black and minority ethnic origin with mental health problems; and
- ◆ supported accommodation for up to six young people leaving care and eight 'difficult to place' young people.

105 Taking three of the services as examples, there are now 44 staff employed by the STAR service, with 387 council tenants 'signed up'. The council is planning to extend the service to other housing tenures. The floating support scheme for people with drug related problems employs the equivalent of seven full time staff and is now very nearly fully subscribed. There are also 128 single homeless people receiving support from the RISE⁵ scheme.

106 One important scheme that is now in the process of redevelopment is the new night shelter. The council secured £1.4 million of funding for a city centre development, of which £750,000 was awarded by the rough sleepers unit. A new site has been identified, planning permission granted and it is currently on target to start building in the summer 2004.

107 In May 2003 a system for prioritising bids for funding was in place, but it was not transparent how the various priorities were to be rationalised. Since then, a 'Partnership Day' was held in September 2003 for everyone involved in Supporting People. This day was used to start the process of prioritising the priorities. A paper has also been written on a scheme for prioritising new developments but more work is needed on this to develop a transparent weighting system to aid decision making.

How does the performance compare?

108 In order to judge the quality of a service, it is important to compare the performance of that service against other suppliers across a range of sectors. The aim is not exact comparison, but an exploration of how similar services (or elements of services) perform in order to identify significant differences, the reasons for them and the extent to which improvements are required.

⁵ Resettlement Inclusion Support Empowerment is the acronym of the City Council's resettlement and tenancy support service for single people and childless couples aged over 16.

- 109 The details of the data used to inform comparisons are included in the data appendix of this report. Where possible, we have compared the council with other councils in its Audit Commission family group (councils with similar general characteristics). We have also compared the council with the best and worst performing 25 per cent of unitary councils for that indicator.
- 110 The current funding profile (outlined in the data appendix) shows that the grant per head of population is higher than the East Midlands and England average. However, the unit cost, excluding community alarms and sheltered schemes, shows that these costs are below average. There is a below average level of investment in supported accommodation services and higher levels of investment in floating support schemes.
- 111 The performance assessment framework 2002/03 identifies that the council performs well in relation to a number of indicators that will impact on its Supporting People programme. The council performs significantly above average in terms of admissions of older people to residential or nursing care. Above average performance is shown for helping adults with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health needs live at home. The council has no services that perform significantly below average.
- 112 The best value performance indicators 2002/03 show that Leicester performed well in terms of the length of stays in bed and breakfast and hostel accommodation and had above average performance in terms of the number of domestic violence refuge places.
- 113 Externally, the council's performance has been assessed through the corporate performance assessment in 2003 as good. This has changed from the assessment of fair in December 2002. The council has made significant improvements in social care and use of resources. It has also made further corporate changes by clarifying its key priorities, shifting resources to these areas and strengthening performance management.
- 114 The social services Inspectorate/department of health star ratings in 2003 gave the social care and health department an overall rating of two stars with most adults and children served well and with promising prospects.
- 115 There are currently no specific performance indicators (PIs) for the Supporting People programme. A range is currently being developed by the Government for use by Supporting People teams. Administering local authorities and their partners are also being encouraged to develop local PI's which could be used to compare services at a local level. The commissioning body will need to decide on its performance management and monitoring arrangements and further work is needed to develop shared targets across agencies and develop local performance indicators that show the impact of the Supporting People programme in Leicester.

Summary

- 116 Overall we judge that Leicester is delivering a good, two star service.
- 117 The council has established clear and ambitious aims for the programme, but needs to ensure that service users exercise a greater degree of influence. Supporting People is included in the 'better care, higher standards' charter and the absence of an older person's strategy is being addressed. However the local delivery plans of the NHS trusts do not yet reflect the part that Supporting People can play.
- 118 The key systems and structures are in place and have worked well. The IT system was implemented on time and within budget and consequently payments

have been made on time to the providers. A charging policy is in place and a timetable for reviews agreed. Only one contract remains to be signed and this service will be the subject of an early review. The commissioning body is working on a transparent means of developing services. A comprehensive toolkit has been developed to aid the service review process.

- 119 The council's partners are well briefed and there has been effective support provided by the council to service providers. There is some evidence that service users have been consulted indirectly and in the case of the STAR service, have had an influence upon the shape of the service, however, this work needs to be developed amongst all service users regardless of housing tenure.
- 120 There has been a considerable growth in housing related support services, backed up with evidence of need among most 'need' groups. The council has resolved the future location of the night shelter and building is on target to start in the summer of 2004. However, the quality of information about the housing related support needs of some groups is poor.
- 121 The council's performance in housing over a range of indicators is generally strong. The level of social services performance varies from average to very good and the department has been awarded an overall rating of two stars with most adults and children served well and with promising prospects. The council has also improved its CPA rating from fair to good.

What are the prospects for improvement to the service?

- 122 Inspectors have judged the service's prospects for improvement based on its capacity to improve using the four building blocks for effective improvement identified in 'Changing Gear'.
- ◆ Ownership of problems and willingness to change.
 - ◆ A sustained focus on what matters.
 - ◆ The capacity and systems to deliver performance and improvement.
 - ◆ Integration of continuous improvement into day to day management.

Ownership of problems and willingness to change

- 123 It was clear to the inspection team that there is ownership of the Supporting People agenda by senior managers and councillors. To illustrate this, the accountable officer is the director of social care and health, who sits on the commissioning body and a number of key inter-agency groups.
- 124 The Supporting People shadow strategy for 2003/04 sets out to address many of the gaps in the council's knowledge, such as the support needs of specific groups and there is an inclusive approach to the planning and development of the five year strategy.
- 125 Representation from most other organisations is equally high level. Prominence is given to supporting survivors of domestic violence, victims of racial harassment, improving local health and social care services and the independence of older and disabled people within the community plan, to which each agency is signed up. This should provide an important driver to joint working as other priorities, such as the establishment of the primary care trusts, settle down. A consequence of all of this is, we were told:

'The Supporting People team is being asked rather than having to negotiate our way in to key meetings'. – Member of the Supporting People team.

- 126 We were impressed by the self-awareness of the Supporting People team to the weaknesses and imminent challenges that it needs to address. 'Team culture' and 'open and supportive management' were cited by the Supporting People team itself as examples of what works well.
- 127 We also found some important examples of difficult issues being tackled. The council itself has made £22 million in savings since local government reorganisation to achieve a balanced budget. In other services it has tackled areas such as the closure of schools and in housing it has undertaken demolitions and partial stock transfers to address the problems that it has faced.
- 128 In delivering its responsibilities as the administering authority for Supporting People the council is faced with a requirement to make savings in the budget over the coming year and has thought through how to do so. The approach being taken is to carry out early service reviews of recently expanded and high cost services, the planned permanent or temporary closures of services, the recouping of excess grant payments to providers and the recouping of any grants going to registered care homes.
- 129 Our only cause for concern in this respect are that the top level drive for Supporting People has not yet been reflected in the strategic plans of the primary care trusts and the health authority. An issue that highlights this is that a children's trust has been developed to bring together all of the key services by October 2003. In spite of the needs of 16 to 18 year olds that Supporting People

can address in areas such as young people leaving care and teenage pregnancies, the connection has not been made. For primary care trusts getting Supporting People on the agenda is an issue of timing and should be addressed as part of the local delivery plans.

- 130 We are also concerned that the council has taken so long to address the quality of its sheltered housing. This clearly involves making difficult decisions in a way in which residents are involved and do not feel alarmed. The problems of older sheltered housing have been known about for many years and other councils have made significantly more progress. However, the council has begun to tackle this issue and so far two sheltered schemes have been decommissioned.

A sustained focus on what matters

- 131 The degree to which the council has focussed on getting the systems in place and increasing the supply of support services is strong evidence of its ability to focus on what matters. The result has been systems that work and an unprecedented growth in services. The council has been aided by the national project plan for the implementation of Supporting People and has focused its work around this. This has included the diversion of resources to address issues such as the grants formula that had originally been the responsibility of the ODPM.
- 132 The Supporting People commissioning body is responsible for ensuring that the programme establishes and sustains a high profile across the partner agencies. It is not yet clear if this has been achieved in Leicester and further work is required to ensure that a robust and effective body is in place especially in view of the continuing absence of the PCT representative at these meetings.
- 133 The drive to see new services up and running has meant less emphasis upon user involvement, but the Supporting People team recognises that this is a weakness that needs to be addressed. Since May 2003, users have been involved in the programme in a number of ways including approximately 200 users giving their views on services through the review process. An external consultant will be appointed to work with users on the development of the five year strategy.
- 134 The Supporting People team also recognises the need to move from a successful focus on processes to one on outcomes. These outcomes need to be defined in terms of successful outcomes for the users of services, rather than simply the growth of new and existing services. There is a need for the council to closely examine the quality of some of its long standing existing services, particularly its sheltered housing stock, and robustly challenge whether they are fit for purpose and meeting a sustained demand. The council then needs to implement an action plan to resolve the identified problems within a reasonable timescale.
- 135 There have been a few examples so far of the council shifting resources to achieve improvements. The development of lifeways bungalows for people with a learning disability was achieved by transferring the ownership of bungalows and meeting the revenue costs by transferring money from the residential care budget to the supported living budget. The council has also found £180,000 to increase the capacity of the Supporting People team itself and the housing department has fully resourced the new IT system.

The capacity and systems to deliver performance and improvement

- 136 The Supporting People team is a significant strength. The team is committed and its members have a wide range of relevant skills and experience that includes

finance, IT, health service, regeneration, child protection, education, voluntary sector and contracting expertise. All of the organisations and groups that we spoke to were unanimous in their praise for the team's expertise and performance to date.

- 137 The commissioning body will soon have to make some difficult decisions about de-commissioning and reconfiguring longstanding and more recently developed services. The membership and terms of reference of this body are clear but we were disappointed to note that the PCT representative has not attended the last three meetings – held between September 2003 and January 2004.
- 138 The council has a performance management system in place and targets have been set for individual staff. These do reflect the implementation plan for Supporting People, but could become SMARTer⁷. Targets which could be clearer include, 'improve needs data', 'ensure programme covers wide range of needs groups' and 'promote Supporting People to existing and potential providers'. Since May, staff reviews have been carried out and key measurable tasks identified. These will be monitored in regular supervision sessions and more formally every 6 months. In addition, training has been commissioned for staff to take place in March 2004 on commissioning Supporting People services.
- 139 Councillors have considerable involvement in monitoring performance both directly through the scrutiny committee and externally, through membership of primary care trusts and other bodies. This role should be strengthened further as the results of scheme reviews are reported to councillors and the public at large. At the providers forum held in February 2004, there was an agreement in principle for the results of the service reviews to be reported on the council's website to ensure transparency and accessibility.
- 140 The emerging role of health scrutiny will provide a further means of ensuring that all of the public services are working together and moving in the same direction.

Integration of continuous improvement into day-to-day planning

- 141 The council as a whole has an excellent track record of continuous improvement. It has been awarded beacon council status for three services; community cohesion, repairs and the homelessness service. It was highlighted as a source of good practice by the Cantle Report (the Report of the disturbances of Summer 2001 - Home Office, December 2001) into community cohesion.
- 142 The housing service has achieved a 'well above average' rating for its housing strategy for five successive years. The homelessness service was judged to be 'good with excellent prospects for improvement' in June 2002 while the repairs and maintenance service achieved the highest possible rating of an 'excellent service, with excellent prospects' in September 2002. The council has also seen the number of families in bed and breakfast accommodation fall to zero over recent months, in spite of increasing demands arising from refugees and rising house prices. The number of empty properties and the time taken to relet homes has also been falling over a long period of time.
- 143 It was evident that the managers and councillors were open to constructive criticism and recognised the challenge to maintain the high ratings that the services had achieved. Comments on how the service had developed during its relatively short life ranged from 'cautiously optimistic' to 'improving'.

⁷ Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-related.

Summary

- 144 Overall we judge that the Supporting People programme has promising prospects for delivering further improvements.
- 145 There is high level commitment within and outside the council to Supporting People, although some of this has yet to be translated into the plans and strategies of partners, especially health.
- 146 The council has shown itself to be capable of addressing difficult issues, both corporately and in terms of supported housing. Resources have been increased over and above grant levels and there is a strong and pragmatic focus based around the national project plan for Supporting People, this has ensured that the most important actions have been implemented.
- 147 The Supporting People team is committed, enthusiastic and brings with it a strong body of experience in different services. There is a performance management system in place and councillors are involved in monitoring progress. The council has a track record of responding positively to inspection recommendations and well above average ratings of its housing strategy.
- 148 However, we are unable to award a higher improvement judgement as the council needs to address that the outcomes of users' involvement are determining the delivery of services and improvements that people need as well as translating the high level commitment of the council's partners to Supporting People into their plans and strategies.

Appendices

The purpose of a best value inspection is to make two judgements. The first is how good is the service being inspected? The second is what are the prospects for improvement? We carried out a range of activities to enable us to reach our judgements. We have also included key demographic and performance information.

Documents reviewed

Before going on site and during our visit, we reviewed various documents that the Council provided for us. These included:

- ◆ Leicester's Community Plan.
- ◆ Leicester City Corporate Plan 2002/06 and other corporate documents including the Community Safety Strategy, Corporate Procurement Strategy and Equal Opportunities Policy.
- ◆ Supporting People Shadow Strategy 2003-2008.
- ◆ Better Care, Higher Standards and other Social Services documents.
- ◆ Various Housing Strategies including the Homelessness Strategy.
- ◆ The Council's Best Value Performance Plan 2002/03.
- ◆ A range of advice sheets and protocols.
- ◆ Notes and minutes of meetings of the Supporting People planning groups.
- ◆ Supporting People Action Plan developed after the May inspection.

Reality checks undertaken

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 Supporting People programme is. These on-site reality checks were designed to gather evidence about what it is like to access and use Supporting People services and to see how well they work. We also followed up on issues relating to the management of the Supporting People programme and the improvements flowing from it. Our reality checks included:

- ◆ Focus groups of service users.
- ◆ Focus group of the Supporting People team.
- ◆ Focus group of service providers.
- ◆ Focus group of providers of services for black and minority ethnic groups.
- ◆ Focus group of tenant associations.
- ◆ Attendance at meetings of the commissioning body.
- ◆ Visits to Council reception areas.
- ◆ Visits to and meetings with residents of the night shelter, the YMCA and sheltered housing.

List of people interviewed

We met a range of people involved with the Supporting People programme in Leicester. All are Leicester City Council managers and councillors, unless where indicated. They included:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Steve Brown | Housing Benefit Manager |
| Ian Butler | Manager, South Leicester YMCA |
| Barry Coles | Opposition spokesperson for housing and social care |
| Paul Clarke | Finance lead manager for Supporting People |
| Andrew Cozens | Director of Social Care and Health |
| Bhupen Dave | Head of Adult Services |
| Cllr Mary Draycott | Cabinet portfolio holder for housing |
| Cllr Gordon Getcliffe | Cabinet portfolio holder for social care & health |
| Mel Elliot | Planning and Commissioning Manager |
| Mike Forrester | Director of Housing |
| Alan Gray | Leicestershire Probation Service |
| Rodney Green | Chief Executive |
| Paul Hindson | Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Service |
| Pat Hobbs | Service Director Housing Management & Hostels |
| Manoj Joshi | Supporting People Manager, Rutland County Council |
| Andy Keeling | Service Director, Neighbourhood Renewal |
| Christine Legget | Care and Repair Manager |
| Anne Mather | IT Lead for Supporting People |
| Dr Sue Read | Public Health Consultant, Leicester East PCT |
| Neil Smith | Manager, Lyndon Lodge (Carr Gomm Housing Association) |
| Denise Steadman | Supporting People Manager |
| Dr Rashmi Shukla | Public Health Director, Eastern Leicester PCT |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Rob McMahon | Chief Executive, Leicester City West PCT |
| Sally Vallance | Supporting People Policy & Service Development Officer |
| Sally Atkinson | Supporting People Policy & Service Development Officer |
| Jim Mulineaux | Supporting People Policy & Service Development Officer |
| Ann Branson | Service Director, Housing Renewal and Options |

Appendices

Demographic information

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

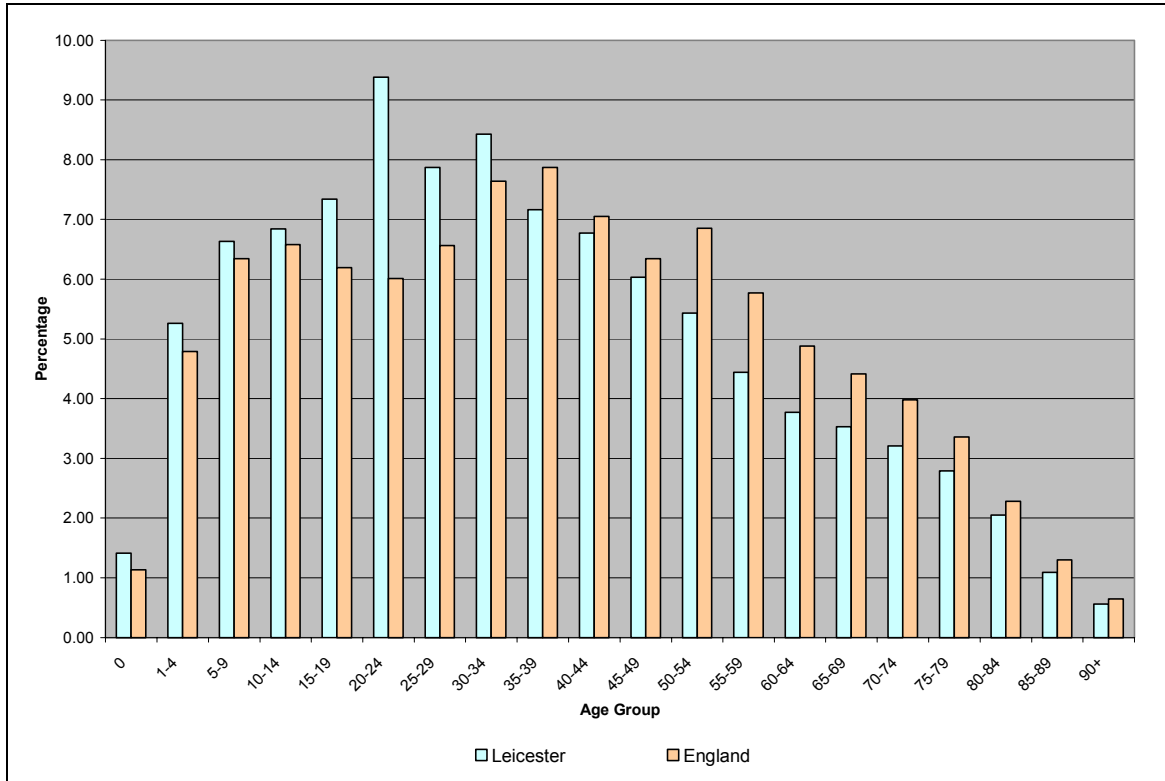
| Measure | Leicester | England |
|---|-----------|---------|
| Population (mid-2001) | 279,921 | - |
| Percentage of the population aged 65+ (mid-2001) | 13.23 | 15.9 |
| Percentage from minority ethnic groups (all groups other than White – British 2001) | 29.49 | 12.5 |
| Percentage unemployment (claimant count rate April 2003) | 5.4 | 2.6 |
| Deprivation Index (1 highest, 354 lowest) ⁹ | 35 | - |
| Multiple deprivation – wards in the most deprived 10 per cent ¹⁰ | 13 of 28 | - |
| Access to services - wards in the most deprived 10 per cent ¹¹ | 0 of 28 | - |

⁹ Indices of Deprivation 2000, average ward score for the authority.

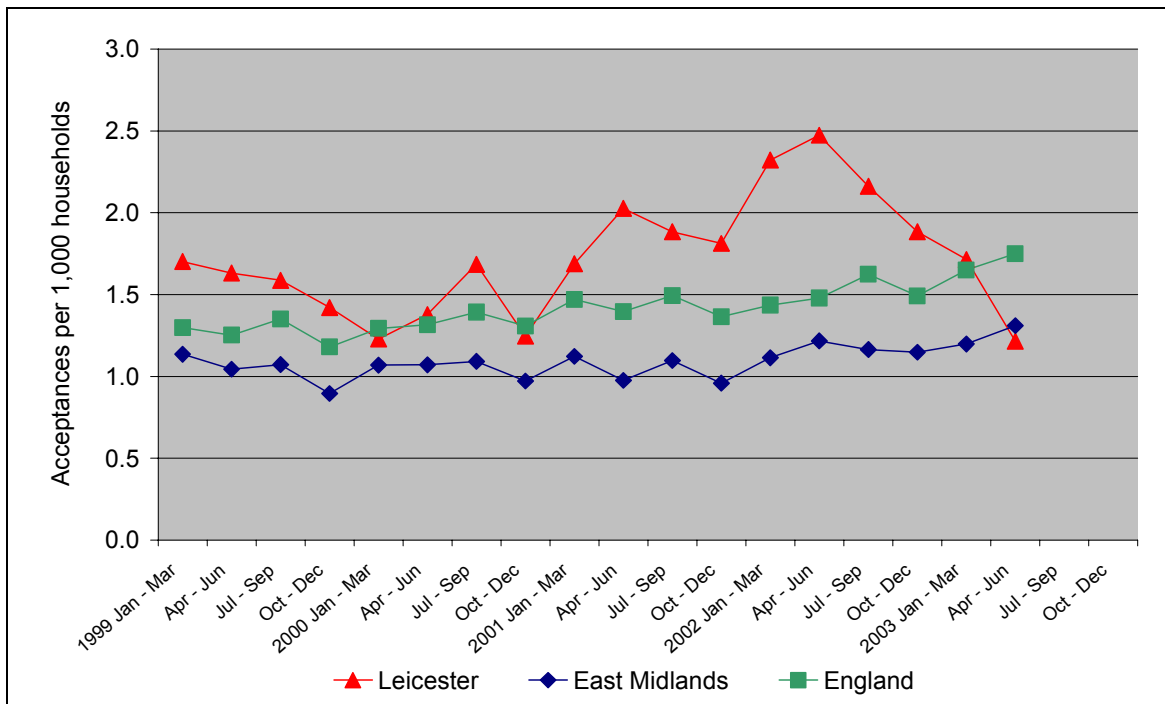
¹⁰ Indices of Deprivation 2000, rank of index of multiple deprivation rank (out of 8414 wards).

¹¹ Indices of Deprivation 2000, rank of access domain (out of 8414 wards).

Percentage of the population in each age group compared with England



Households accepted as homeless between 1999 and 2003 compared with the region and England (acceptances per 1,000 households)



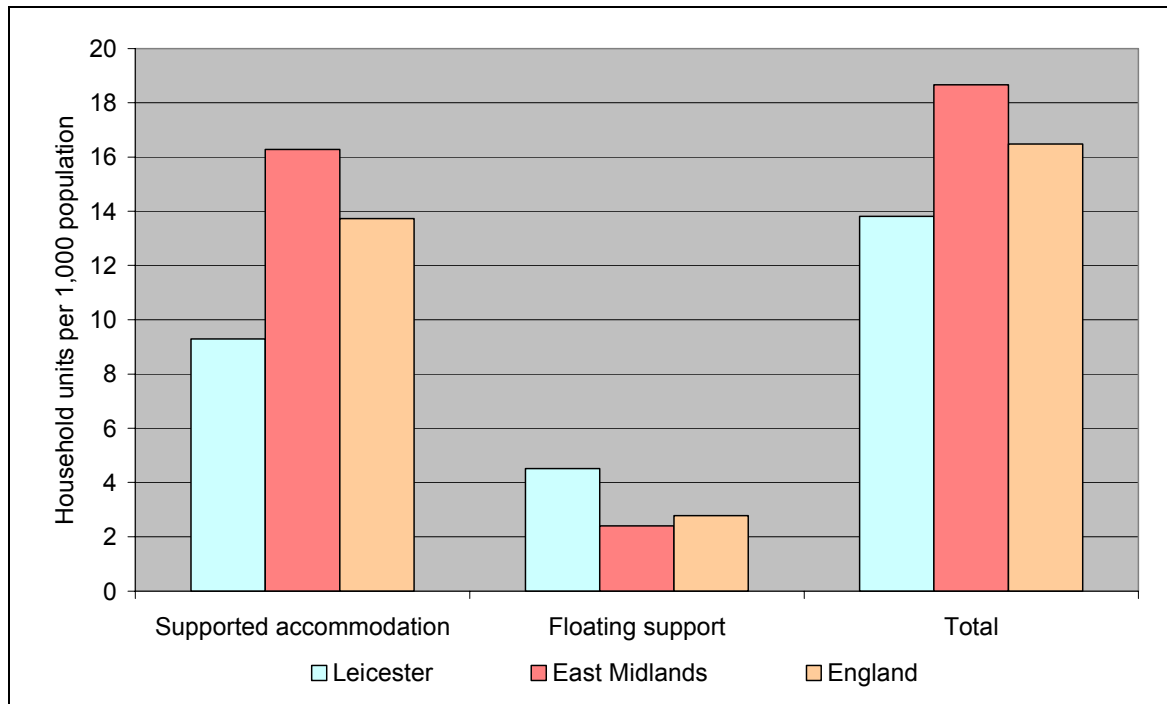
Performance information

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

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

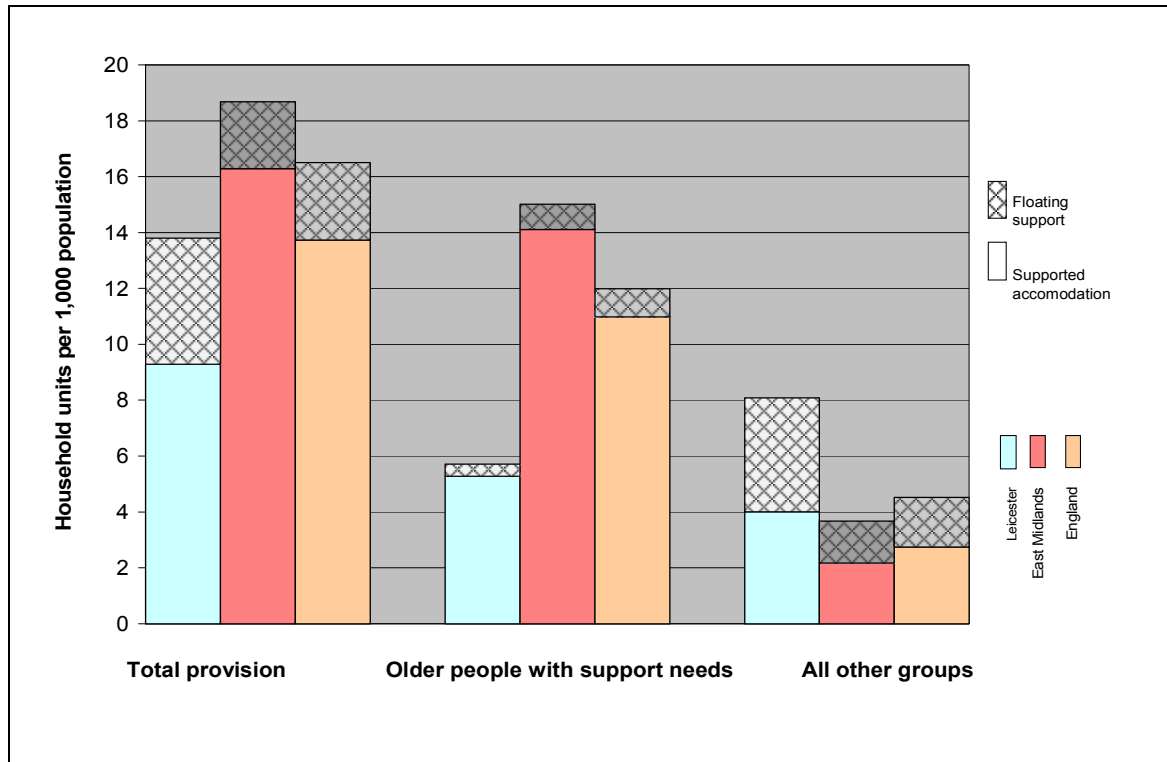
Supporting People data

Total service provision funded through Supporting People¹²



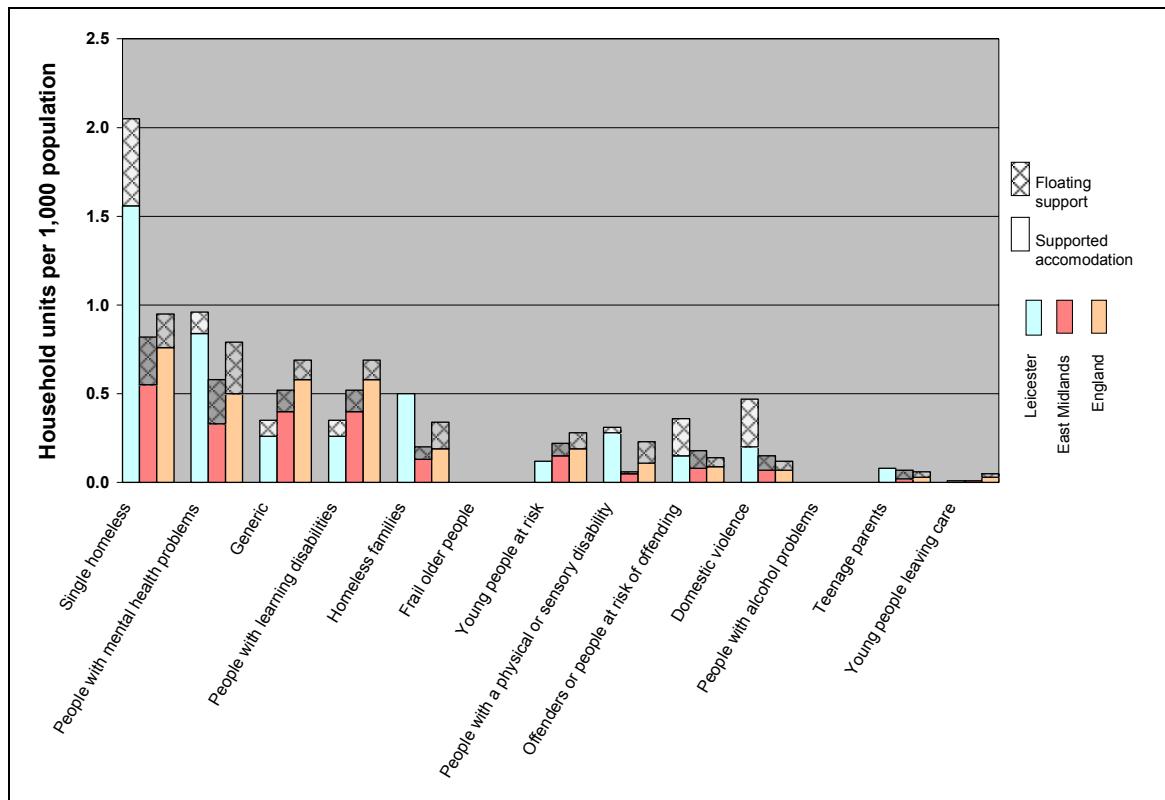
¹² Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

Services for older people with support needs compared with the region and England¹³



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

Services for other groups compared with the region and England¹⁴



Funding for Supporting People in 2003/04

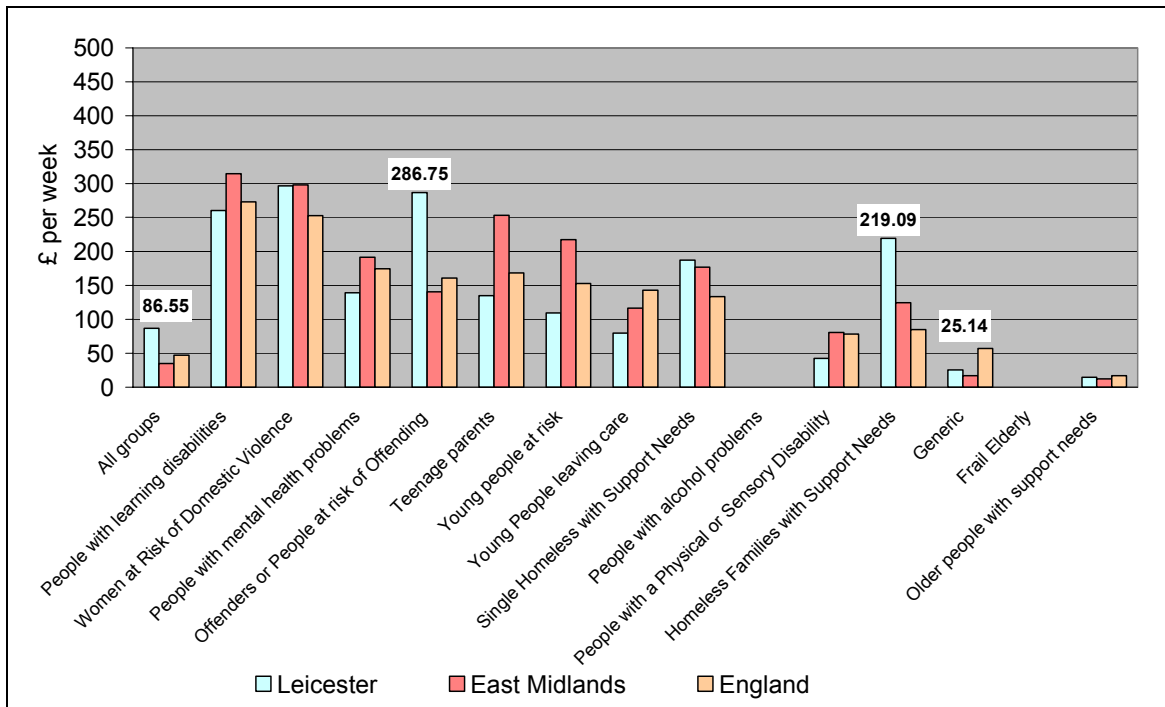
| | Final Supporting People grant 2003/04 | Pipeline allocation June 2003 | Administration grant 2003/04 |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Leicester | £ 17,156,746 | £ 192,026 | £ 248,518.69 |

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

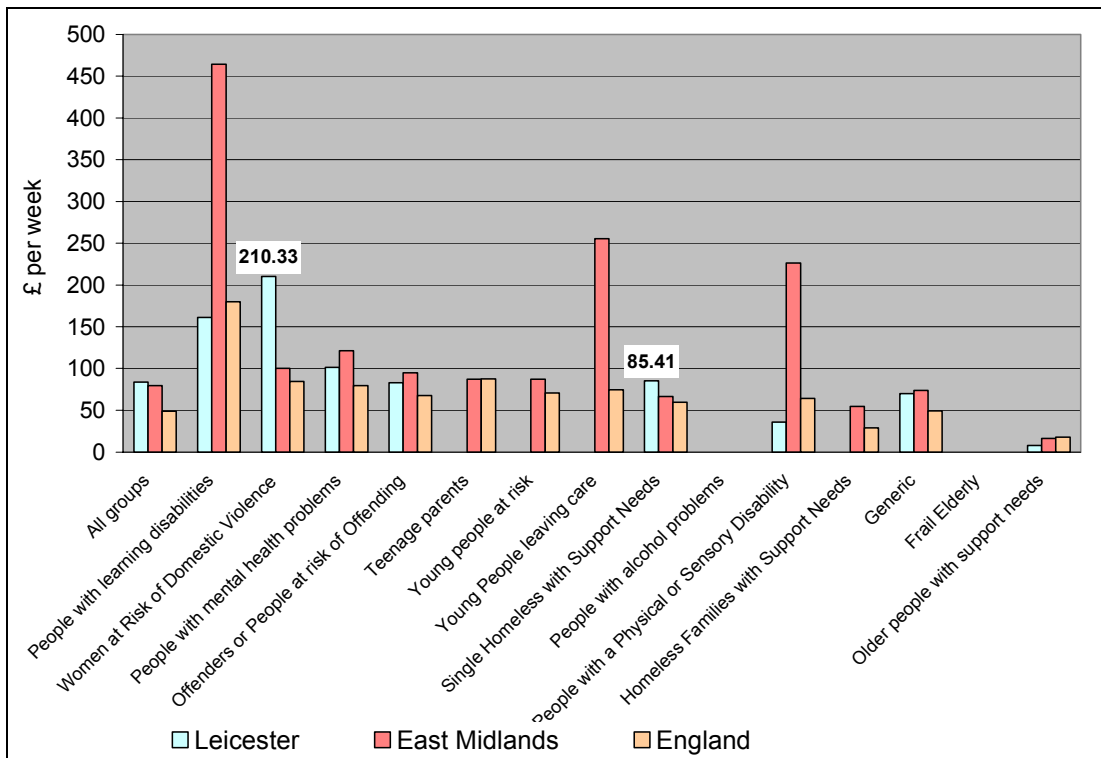
| | Per head of population | Per unit | Per unit excluding community alarms | Per unit excluding community alarms & sheltered housing |
|---------------|------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Leicester | £1.16 | £ 38.03 | £ 62.34 | £ 62.34 |
| East Midlands | £ 0.69 | £ 24.96 | £ 31.50 | £ 88.82 |
| England | £ 0.70 | £ 28.30 | £ 34.71 | £ 76.37 |

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

Unit costs of supported accommodation compared with the region and England (labels show costs in the highest 25 per cent)¹⁵

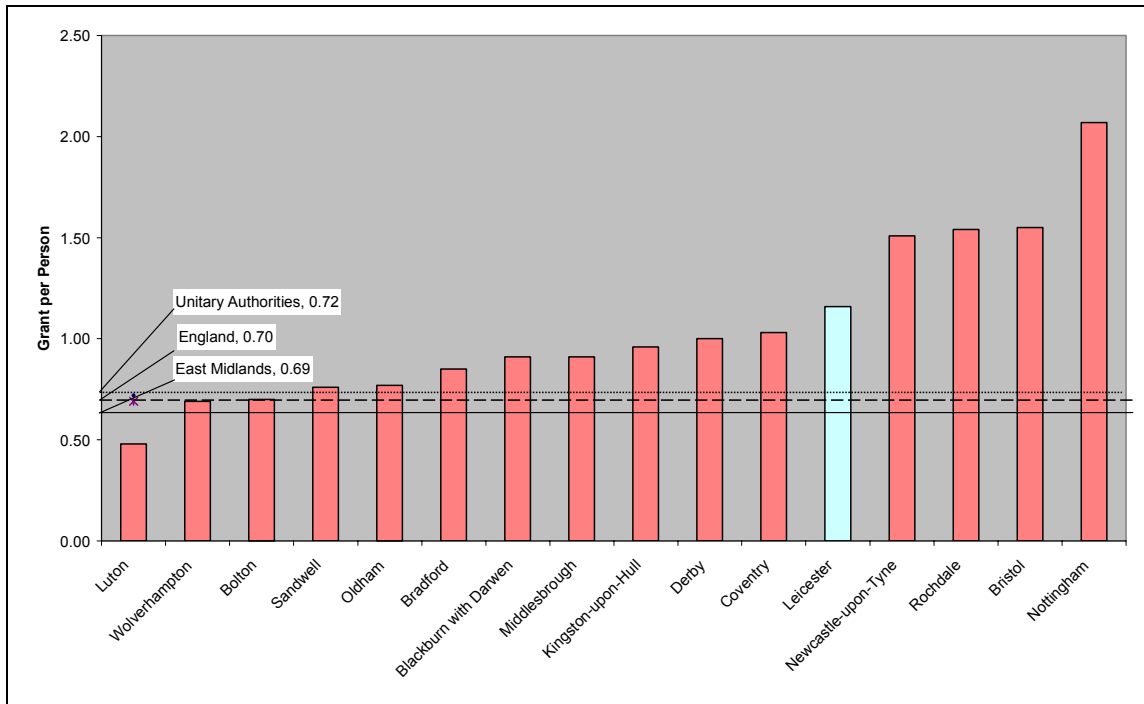


Unit costs of floating support services compared with the region and England (labels show costs in the highest 25 per cent)

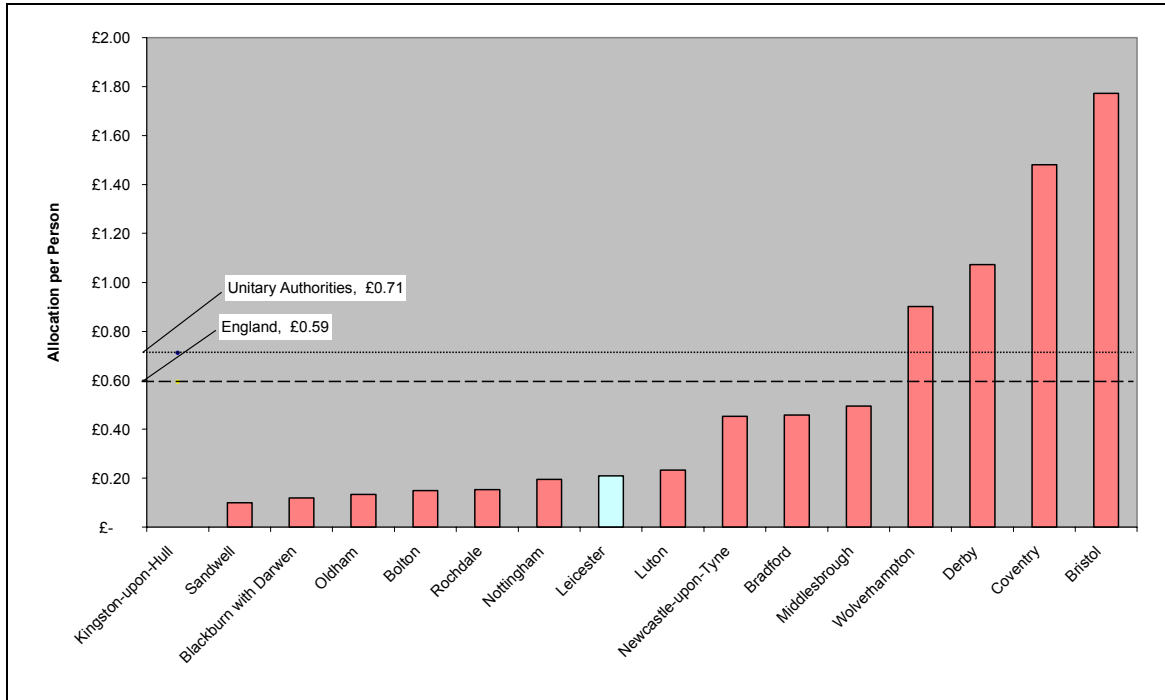


¹⁵ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

Supporting People grant per head of population per week compared with nearest neighbours¹⁶, all unitary councils and all English councils (2003/04)

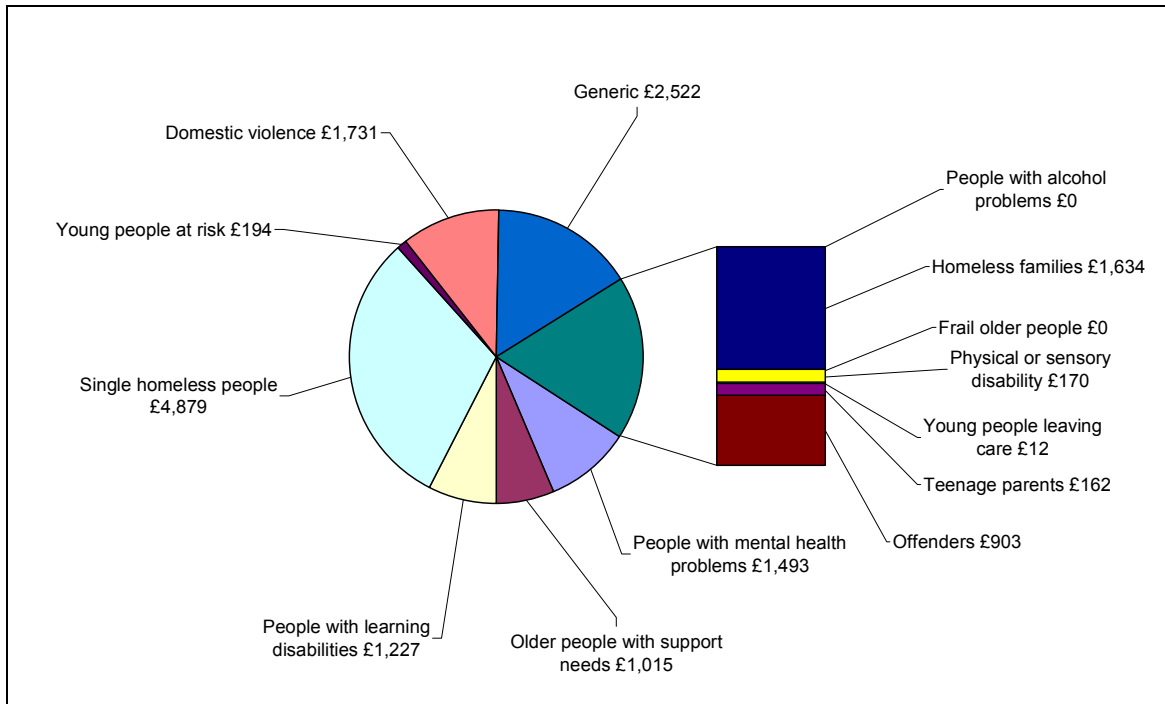


Pipeline allocation per head of population compared with nearest neighbours, all unitary councils and all English councils.

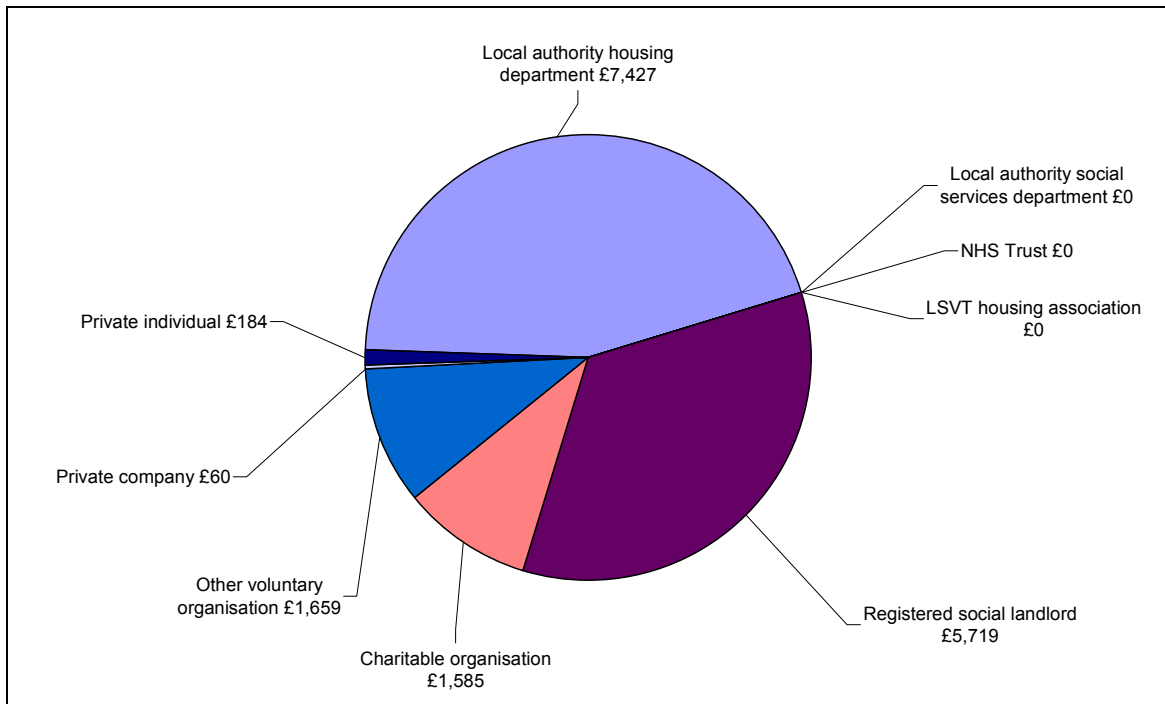


¹⁶ A comparator group of similar councils.

Share of spending between user groups (£000s)



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



Social Services star ratings November 2003

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

| | Serving people well? | Prospects for improvement? | Performance rating (CPA equivalent) |
|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Adults' Services | Most | Promising | ★★★ |
| Children's Services | Most | Promising | (3) |

Social services performance indicators

Performance Assessment Framework indicators 2002/03

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

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Leicester | |
| Significantly above average (•••••) | Admissions of older people to residential or nursing care (C26) Admissions to hospital of people aged 75 or over due to hypothermia or a fall (C33) Items of equipment costing less than £1,000 delivered within 3 weeks (D38) |
| Above average (••••) | Admissions of adults aged 18-64 to residential or nursing care (C27) Adults with physical disabilities helped to live at home (C29) Adults with learning disabilities helped to live at home (C30) Adults with mental health problems helped to live at home (C31) |
| Average (•••) | Older people helped to live at home (C32) Delayed discharges for older people (D41) New clients for whom length of time from first contact to first service was more than six weeks (D43) |
| Below average (••) | Employment, education & training for care leavers (A4) Emergency psychiatric re-admissions (A6) |
| Significantly below average (•) | |

Best value performance indicators

Performance on relevant indicators in 2002/3 compared with unitary councils

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

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Leicester | |
| Within the best 25 per cent | <p>The level of the equality standard for local government to which the authority conforms (BV2)</p> <p>Length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation (BV183a)</p> <p>Racial incidents that resulted in further action (BV175)</p> <p>Domestic violence refuge places (BV176)</p> |
| Average | <p>Energy efficiency of local authority owned dwellings (BV63)</p> <p>Length of stay in hostel accommodation (BV183b)</p> |
| Within the worst 25 per cent | <p>Average time for processing new housing benefit claims (BV78a)</p> <p>Racial incidents recorded by the authority (BV174)</p> |

Supporting People – Housing related support services

'Supporting People' is the Government's long-term policy to enable local authorities to plan, commission and provide 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 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 support services with housing, social services, health and the probation service. Negotiation and consultation is also required with 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 programme allows for greater diversity of provision tailored to individual needs and delivered in a local strategic context. For example:

- ◆ support services for people from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities whose needs have previously not been met in an appropriate or timely manner;
- ◆ support services for vulnerable older people who wish to live independently, including those in sheltered housing;
- ◆ temporary hostel accommodation – including probation hostels and those providing support for women fleeing domestic violence;
- ◆ support services for people with mental health problems and learning difficulties;
- ◆ floating support to a range of vulnerable people including young people leaving care; and
- ◆ home improvement agency services whose work includes providing practical support to older owner occupiers to enable them to live independently.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has published a number of consultation papers on the developing programme and a work plan setting out what local Authorities would 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

Positive Practice

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

Positive practice is something which makes a service more effective and, ultimately, more able to deliver what the customer wants. This appendix summarises areas of positive practice found during the inspection of the Supporting People programme at Leicester City Council in 2003/04

Item 1

- ◆ A comprehensive toolkit has been developed for the service reviews and this is available to providers on a CD, in hard copy and can be accessed through the Supporting People pages on the council's website. We were impressed with the toolkit as a practical and helpful guide to the process.

Item 2

- ◆ The Supporting People pages on the council's website are easy to access and contain information about the services and links to other sources of information. These pages have been accessed by providers and users who have used the 'contact us' facility to raise queries about the service.