

# APPENDIX 1

## Scrutiny Project Haringey Job Support Market

A project from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

2014/15

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# CHAIR'S FOREWORD

To follow....

**Cllr Gideon Bull**  
**Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Committee (2014/15)**

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# INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Under the agreed terms of reference, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee can assist the Council and the Cabinet in its budgetary and policy framework through conducting in-depth analysis of local policy issues and make recommendations for service development or improvement.
- 1.2 In this context, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee conducted a review of the Job Support Market, to assess the nature and level of support available to those in long term unemployment. The Committee commenced work in January 2015 and within its plan of work held a number of evidence gathering sessions with local stakeholders, including local long term unemployed people.
- 1.3 This report details the work of the committee together with its final conclusions and recommendations which it is hoped will help improve local support available tom long-term unemployed in Haringey.

# National and local policy context

## National context

- 2.1 Unemployment has been steadily falling in the UK since 2012. This is demonstrated through a number of measures:
- The proportion of working age people who identified themselves as unemployed has fallen from 2.46million (8.1%) in December 2012 to 1.8million (5.7%) in December 2014;
  - The proportion of working age people claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) has reduced from 1.5million (4.6%) in January 2012 to 806,000 (2.6%) in May 2015;<sup>1</sup>
- 2.2 Although there has been a marked fall in unemployment, there is concern at the level of long-term unemployment. Evidence would suggest that of those who are unemployed, the proportion that have been in long term unemployment (for 12 months or more) has been growing and now accounts for over 213,000 (25%) of those claiming JSA.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.3 There is widespread evidence to suggest that the effects of long term unemployment can be profound for the individual concerned. It is noted that those in long term unemployment can experience severe financial deprivation, have higher levels of mental and physical ill health and can become socially excluded. Moreover, unemployment analysis<sup>3</sup> would appear to suggest that the longer people are out of work the greater impact this will have on future employment in that:
- They may be more likely to have lower pay;
  - The incidence future unemployment is greatly increased;
  - The less likely they will ever return to the labour market.
- 2.4 Such effects of long-term worklessness may not just be restricted to those claiming JSA however, as there may be a far larger pool of people claiming other related benefits for similarly long periods of time. It is estimated that, with the inclusion of those claiming Employment Support Allowance<sup>4</sup> or Incapacity Benefit for over 6 months, this would mean that nationally there could be approximately 2.4 million people in long-term worklessness.<sup>5</sup>

## Local context

- 2.5 Locally, as of May 2015 there were 5,216 people that were unemployed and claiming JSA; 3,316 of these were in the Tottenham constituency and 1,853 in the Hornsey & Wood Green constituency (Figure 1). The total number of JSA claimants in Haringey has reduced significantly (46%) over the past two years from 9,786 in February 2013 to 5,216 in May 2015. The JSA claimant rate<sup>6</sup> has also declined significantly for both Haringey constituencies over this same period, though in Tottenham (5%) the rate

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1 Unemployment by constituency, House of Commons Briefing Paper 7256, July 2015

2 Unemployment by constituency, House of Commons Briefing Paper 7256, July 2015

3 Unemployment in the Great Recession, Bell and Blanchflower 2010

<sup>4</sup> (ESA) is a benefit for people who are unable to work due to illness or disability

5 Tackling long-term unemployment, Rachel Salmon, LGiU Policy Briefing March 2015

6 The proportion of those claiming JSA as a percentage of workforce jobs plus the Claimant Count i.e.g. those in employment, self employment, HM forces, and Govt supported trainees.

remains twice that of Hornsey and Wood Green (2.5%) and the London (2.7%) and England (2.4%) average (Figure 2).

- 2.6 In the period February 2013 to May 2015 the number of those claiming JSA for more than 12 months in both Haringey constituencies declined considerably: in Tottenham JSA claimants declined from 1,855 to 965, a 48% reduction (Figure 3) whilst in Hornsey and Wood Green the number of JSA claimants declined from 895 to 540, a 40% reduction (Figure 3). Such reductions in the number of claimants are however below that recorded for London (51%) and for England as a whole (53%).
- 2.7 Assessment of the geographical distribution of longer-term JSA claimants presented clear differentials across Haringey. Geographical analysis of those who had been claiming JSA for 1 year or more (Figure 4) and 2 years or more (Figure 5) demonstrate that although there are pockets of long-term claimants in the west of the borough (Hornsey and Highgate wards), longer term JSA claimants were predominantly resident in the east of the borough (particularly in Northumberland Park, Bruce Grove, Tottenham Hale, Tottenham Green, West Green and Harringay Wards).
- 2.8 Analysis of long- term claimants of JSA by age group) demonstrated higher rates of claimants for those claiming for more than 12 months for every age group in Haringey compared to both London and Great Britain figures (Figure 6. This disparity is most pronounced among 50-64 year old age group where the rate of long-term claimants in Haringey (1.4%) is almost three times greater than the national average (0.5%).
- 2.9 Whilst the number and rate of those claiming JSA may have fallen in Haringey, the number claiming other work age related benefits has increased. Analysis of local Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) data indicates that the number of local in Haringey people claiming ESA has increased significantly from 4,920 in February 2012 to 11,160 in November 2014), a 227% increase (Figure 7). Furthermore, almost 4,500 people have been claiming ESA for two years or more (Figure 8).
- 2.10 There are a large number of agencies that provide wide ranging support for those seeking help back in to employment, education or training. These agencies are commissioned at all levels of government including national, regional and local authority level. The table below is illustrative of range of agencies active in the local job support market in Haringey:

National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job Centre Plus, Work Programme Providers (e.g. Ingeus, Shaw Trust, Reed)</li> </ul>
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater London Authority</li> </ul>
Local Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development Team, Haringey Employment &amp; Skills Team, Haringey Adult Learning Service, Housing Options Team, Public Health Commissioning, Housing Related Support</li> </ul>
Voluntary Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tottenham Hotspur Foundation, Princes Trust, North London Partnership Consortium</li> </ul>
Other public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered Housing Providers – Homes for Haringey, Metropolitan, Family Mosaic,</li> <li>• College of Haringey, Enfield &amp; North East London</li> </ul>

- 2.11 Given the number of agencies involved in the job support market and the different levels of at which services are commissioned; there are inevitable questions as to the effectiveness of coordinated support for local unemployed people.

# Aims, objectives and methods

3.1 The overarching aims of this project was to assess the role of Haringey Council in the local job support market and to identify what actions the Council could take to enable those agencies working in this sector to better serve the needs of local, long term unemployed people. Within this overarching aim, the Committee identified a number of key objectives which included:

- To assess the role and functions of the Council in the local job support market, with particular reference to:
  - its leadership and enabling role;
  - those services it provides directly and those commissioned from third parties;
- To assess how Council operated or commissioned services are aligned and where appropriate work in partnership to better support the needs of local long unemployed;
- To assess the role of local providers in the job support market (e.g. jobcentre plus, Tottenham Foundation, work programme providers) to:
  - Assess the range of services provided to local people in long term unemployment;
  - Identify any gaps or areas of under provision in the local job support market (e.g. information, advice, access to training, apprenticeships);
  - Identify opportunities for joint or collaborative working;
  - Identify priorities and actions for the Council to support the job support market.
- Consult and involve local long term unemployment people to:
  - provide an assessment of their experiences with local job support services;
  - Identify how best work, training and education needs can be provided more effectively in the future.

## Work-plan

3.2 A range of information gathering methods were employed to ensure that Committee had access to the necessary evidence to assist it in its investigation of the job support market in Haringey. This included;

- Desk based reviews (local policy and performance data, comparative data from other authorities);
- Evidence gathering sessions (with Council providers, local partners, local long term unemployed people and other local stakeholders);
- Primary data collection – focus groups and interviews (among long term unemployed);
- Site visits - Job Centre Plus and Haringey Employment & Skills Team;
- Formal panel meetings (to coordinate, plan and monitor work).

3.3 Evidence to assist the Committee in meeting the project objectives was primarily taken at three evidence gathering sessions which were as set out below:

<b>Evidence gathering session</b>	<b>Key Aims &amp; objectives</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
1. Council role in the local job support market (23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What services does the Council provide to support unemployed people?</li> <li>▪ What are the priorities in supporting long term unemployed people?</li> <li>▪ Are there any gaps in the job support market?</li> <li>▪ How effectively do council services work together, and with partners?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council officers</li> </ul>
2. Role of partners in the job support market? (11 <sup>th</sup> February 2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Are there any gaps in the range of support services available to local unemployed?</li> <li>▪ Are there opportunities for local services to work together to better support unemployed people?</li> <li>▪ Are there clear leads and priorities set by the Council to guide and inform work?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Employment and training providers</li> </ul>
3. Perspectives from the long term unemployment (focus groups and interviews March to April 2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How effective are local services in supporting long term unemployed?</li> <li>▪ Are there service any gaps?</li> <li>▪ What can be done to improve local services?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Those in long term unemployment</li> </ul>

3.4 Additional informal panel meetings were held with other key council officers and partners to discuss the work of the panel, emerging findings and confirm possible recommendations:

- AD for Human Resources;
- AD for Planning;
- AD for Procurement.

3.5 A full list of all those who participated in this project is given in Appendix B.



# Key evidence:

## (1) local long term unemployed

## (2) local partners

### Local Long-term unemployed

- 4.1 A number of consultation sessions were held with local long-term unemployed people to help assess their experiences with local job support services and to identify how best work, training and education needs can be provided more effectively. For this purpose, the Committee consulted local long-term unemployed through:
- 2 focus groups (11 people)
  - 6 individual interviews (6 people).
- 4.2 Focus groups and interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed. The following sections provide an overview of the main themes to emerge from this analysis.

### Barriers to employment – IT and Internet access

- 4.3 What was apparent from discussions with local long-term unemployed was that access to IT was fundamental to job search activities and essential to all job seekers irrespective of what job they were applying for:

*‘Even the most basic of jobs we can’t get it because you have to apply on-line. It’s very difficult. They use these long internet application forms and this takes a long time. Even for some basic jobs like working in a care home I have to complete an application of 8-9 pages. We have to do it, it takes so long and after all that, we don’t hear anything.’ (Female, 30’s)*

- 4.4 Despite the centrality of IT to job search activities, many of those interviewed had a poor level of understanding of IT issues:

*‘The problem I have is with all these on line applications, if you haven’t got a clue how to use a computer you get stuck with it... I am not clued up with it all. My brain just can’t cope with it. I have been on so many courses and pass them, but I just seem to end up back down there again. So many jobs that I want to apply for they say please send your CV. I find it hard to attach my CV to applications and to emails.... . At the moment I don’t quite understand what I am doing. It’s not looking good.’ (Male, 50’s)*

*‘The main thing is to help us with the on-line application process. It’s so long and complicated. Even if we just want a cleaning job it’s a long application on line. Lots of people can do these types of jobs obviously, but they can’t do the applications.’ (Female, 30’s)*

- 4.5 In addition to poor IT skills, it was apparent that access to IT facilities locally was problematic, with many community IT facilities being time-limited:

*‘The job centre computing facilities are not that great as you are time limited and it’s really busy there.’ (Male, 20s)*

*'We go to the library and everyone else seems to be upset at this as well. They have to leave without filling in the application forms, it's upsetting as the hour runs away so quickly.'* (Female, 30's)

*'There are computers here at (at JC+) but you only have a certain time as well, it's about an hour. You think about how many computers are here and how many people are coming in, it's not enough.'* (Female, 30's)

- 4.6 Access was also limited in the home-setting as the cost of internet access and computing hardware was prohibitive:

*'I don't have my own computer and this is a problem so I can't apply when I do see jobs. I have to go down the job centre. There are places where you can go to get training to use the computer, but it's very busy there.'* (Male, 50s)

*'I don't have computer access at home so this makes it more of a problem. There is a problem with my lap top but it is too expensive to repair. I go to the library to do things, but it take me so long.'* (Female, 30s)

- 4.7 What was very apparent was that despite limitations on access, IT facilities provided at local libraries were central to the job search activities of local unemployed people:

*'To do one application it takes me over an hour but you get only 1 hour on the computer at the library. They do help you at the library which is good but they are not there all the time. They are very helpful but it just takes so long.'* (Female, 30's)

*'No one wants to be at JC+, you are there to sign on. So if you can go to the library where it is less of a stressful environment then you are going to go there.'* (Female, 50's)

*'You can only get an hour in the library you know and then you have to get off the computer, there's no time to do the job search and we don't have money to go to an internet cafe, so you have to go to the library as its free.'* (Male, 50's)

*'I wouldn't use the JC+ facility... I prefer to use Coombes Croft Library. I meet a couple of other people there every week and we try and help each other and tell each other if we know of anything that's going. I prefer it in there until the schools get out, then it can get quite noisy.'* (Female, 50's)

- 4.8 Besides limited accessibility in the home and in the community, it was also noted that availability of personal support to help use IT was also limited:

*'You don't get much help at JC+, you only get an hour and its going to take you 10 mins to get some help. It was actually getting too stressful to go there so i stopped going. I need to get my own pc to cut all that drama out. I tend not to use the library computer if I can help it, I would prefer to use my own and do it without interruptions. At the jobcentre, people don't get support and you just end up helping those around you.'* (Female, 40's)

*'Accessing computers is a very big issue for us, we have to go to library, we have to meet someone to help us on the computer.'* (Female, 30's)

4.9 From those long-term unemployed consulted within this review, it was clear that one-to-one IT support to assist for job search activities was greatly valued:

*'I just use HEST (Haringey Employment & Skills Team) to help me look for work, I have been coming here for a month. We are trying and we are applying for jobs. Its good here, they help you with the on-line applications and support. It's good to have the computer support.'* (Female 30s')

*'I come here [to HEST] to use the computers and they help me to complete applications which is great.'* (Female, 20's)

4.10 In summary there is need for more coordinated provision of IT services to assist unemployed to help develop access and support to those who need it:

*'More access to the internet would be good. This would really help, especially if there was support as well.'* (Female, 40's)

#### Barriers to employment - Work Experience

4.11 Analysis of qualitative data would also suggest that a second key barrier to unemployment was a lack of work experience. As many of those interviewed had been out of work for some period of time, up to five years in some instances, there was a strong perception that the lack of work experience was a significant barrier to employment.

4.12 Firstly, without work experience, it was difficult to get appropriate references to demonstrate to potential employers that you have the necessary skills:

*'Another big problem is job references. Because I am not working so long, its very hard to get a reference.'* (Male 50's)

*'When you are looking for a job, employers are looking for those people with the hands on experience already, even if you have studied this area it's no good without that practical experience and the references to say that you have the skills to work in this area.'* (Female, 40's)

4.13 From those that had work experience opportunities, it was apparent that this had greatly assisted them in their job search activities, particularly in relation to completing application forms and in interviews:

*'People need the experience as well.... it's good for them. Until I had that experience, I did not know certain things about retail but now I know a lot more and can use this in applications and interviews. You have got to talk about things that are relevant, but if you haven't got the experience what can you talk about?'* (Female, 20's)

4.14 It was also apparent that work experience opportunities were also beneficial in that they helped to keep people in-touch with the job-market and helped to benchmark their skills:

*'I think one of the solutions for long term unemployed is work placements, where we can be matched up with a suitable employer, even if its just for two weeks. So even if they don't want us, we will get some experience and skills and give us a sense of purpose. It will also allow us to see how well our skills match up and*

*what we may need to upgrade yourself. Just to be in that work environment would be good too.'* (Female, 40's)

*'I work (voluntarily) for a local support centre and the Human Resources people had to sort it out with JC+. I now have to get up at 6am to do the job search and do some applications and then go there afterward. I have to keep myself busy and make sure I am meeting people and doing something, it's important to me.... it keeps me busy and keeps me in touch with things and learning things.'* (Female, 50's)

- 4.15 What also emerges is that work experience also helped to improve the confidence and self-esteem of unemployed:

*'I have just finished a work experience [in a shop]... I was an assistant there that stocked shelves and put new stuff out. It was for one month and a half and I really enjoyed it. I wished it was longer. The experience was great as I got to speak to people and it made me more confident as I was a little shy before. I thought I interacted well with everyone. It's given me a real boost... '* (Female, 20's)

- 4.16 Analysis also noted a number of structural barriers to work experience opportunities. Firstly there was a perception that the job support market was imbalanced, where the number of skills and training opportunities far outweighed work experience opportunities:

*'They have lot of CV workshops and similar things, but they are not a lot of use if you don't have any experience to put on your CV. A lot of places which are looking for people are looking for people who have done it before and is experienced in it. But you'll never get that job without the experience – there's never any kind of training to help you get in to these things. There's no work experience.'* (Female 30's)

- 4.17 Despite the positive contribution that work experience can provide to unemployed people, qualitative analysis appeared to demonstrate that there were simply not enough work experience opportunities available locally and that this would be welcome addition to the local job support market landscape:

*'I think the one of the most beneficial things that could be done is that you should find work placements for people, where people can be trialled in that role on a probationary period and if you pass that, it could lead in to a possible full time employment. It's important to help establish links for people. It gives you the possibility of developing your skills. I think there are so few opportunities.'* (Male, 20s)

*'I think there should be more work experience opportunities. I think it would help with my confidence and give me one step forward. I also need that work experience though to keep your skills.'* (Male, 50's)

*'But the key thing is work experience, this is what would help me a bunch, I need more experience to help me especially as I've been out of work a while. It's difficult to get a reference in this situation.'* (Female, 20's)

#### Barriers to employment – job, skills and training opportunities

4.18 Analysis of qualitative contributions also revealed a third key barrier to employment which was the accessibility of jobs, skills and training opportunities locally. A strong and consistent theme throughout the focus groups and interviews was that such opportunities were not systematically promoted to local unemployed people and that too often, such opportunities were come across by chance:

*'The thing is jobs come in which we are not always made aware of which is frustrating. It just feels a bit ad hoc as to how you get to her about them.'* (Male, 20s)

*'I do think that there are some good jobs here in the job centre, it's just that they are not telling everyone about them. I heard my adviser talking to someone on the phone about a job and asking them to come in for an interview, it's a job that I would have wanted but he didn't say anything to me, I had to go and ask if I could apply for it and I got an interview the next day. If had not asked, I would not have been given those details.'* (Female, 30's)

*'What Job Centre Plus should do is have a list of all the jobs and training that they do have and can provide for people and show them to you and see if these are any use to you. The information is available, but it's not being made available to us.'* (Female, 40s)

*'I have not used any other local service or support group as I am not aware of it, maybe I need to go out there and look it up. I've not been notified that there are adult learning courses and other support, its left for you to figure it out yourself.'* (Female, 40's)

4.19 Whilst there was recognition that there may be lots of opportunities for local people, the communication and presentation of such opportunities could be improved:

*'I think Haringey does offer a lot, it's just finding out about these things. I mean, they are notices in Haringey People, there is stuff on the notice boards of local libraries. It also comes down to finance as well, as a lot of these things aren't free. I think overall as borough it tries, but there is lack of good communications and being aware of what's on offer. There's a lot out there, but you have to find it.'* (Female, 50's)

4.20 More specifically, qualitative analysis suggested the need to collate and promote the local jobs, skills and training offer to unemployed people to increase awareness and uptake. This included further training and awareness to local advisers and improved web collation and communication:

*'It would be good if there was more information in one place about what opportunities there are, like work experience or training courses or employment opportunities. The long term unemployed need to be better informed so they know what's available to them out there.'* (Female, 40's)

*'But more than that, they just need to give you all the details of all the courses that are available. I am always looking ways to improve myself, so always looking for courses.'* (Female, 40's)

*'I think the information should be collated on a website and the advisers should have it as well. I mean not everyone goes on the internet or who needs help with it, so it should be with the advisers as well.'* (Female, 40's)

- 4.21 Qualitative analysis would also suggest that there are additional barriers that unemployed people face in access local courses. Although many of the courses were subsidised for unemployed people, the cost was still prohibitive:

*'The HALS service provides some very good courses albeit we have to pay for them now which I don't think we should. They have just returned a cheque for £22 for a course that I had signed up to but didn't run because there were not enough people on it. Do you mean to tell me that unemployed people don't know about this or maybe it's just too expensive? The cost of the course is a barrier, but I am determined to get back into the labour market so will pay to do these courses. Ok they are only £7.50 each or £10 each, but that's £30 of my dole money gone.'*

- 4.22 It was noted that Job Centre Plus is a significant provider of training for local unemployed people and will also fund courses. Qualitative analysis however, would suggest that the authorisation process for such courses could be improved:

*'The real problem that I have is with courses. If you want to better yourself it is going to cost you money and if you can't get that money, then you can't do the course. You can do courses and you can get these on line quite cheaply, but I was told that you can do the course (by Job Centre Plus), but it has to go to a decision maker to do the course and depending on the hours and that. But in the time that the decision maker is going to get back to you, if you are buying a course on line, the course is gone. It's not big money either, its £20-£30. If they are not happy with it then you may have to get a loan until the decision maker is happy with it, what is that all about, it's just not encouraging people. It doesn't motivate people.'* (Female, 40's)

#### Barriers to employment – low pay

- 4.23 A recurrent theme in the interviews and focus groups with unemployed people was that many of the jobs on offer were for the minimum wage or low paid, which on balance was prohibitive as this level of income did not meet their basic needs:

*'I have been referred to Urban Futures...they tried to put me in a project with Stansted Airport, but it just wasn't practical because if I did get a job there I'd need to spend so much on travel, and the jobs weren't even the London minimum wage, so it would be kind of pointless. When you calculated it all up, it wouldn't work. There is a minimum level of income I need.'* (Male, 20s)

*'Even when people do get a job through the job centre, it's not a good job, its minimum pay or too few hours and you're better off not working. It's not feasible to apply for a job that thousands of others are applying for and which, once you've paid all your rent and council tax, leaves you in the minus. It's not that people don't want to work, the jobs are not there and don't pay enough to cover your expenses.'* (Male, 30's)

*'... my rent is £800 pm, then there's council tax, if I am working, I have to pay that as a minimum. I don't have any other extras, all I have is TV license, gas eclectic and water. I have to get a job that covers all these basics and the minimum wage isn't going to do that.'* (Female, 40's)

*'... the advisers have done the benefit in work calculation, and even though I get less than what you are supposed to get, I get £77 every two weeks, they keep taking bits off through sanctions. That's for everything, food, council tax, gas and electric, everything. But at the moment, it's clear from their calculations that I am better off out of work than in work. Even on a full time minimum wage job, I would be better off out of work.'* (Female, 40's)

- 4.24 It was apparent that job seekers require further advice in respect of the range and level of support that can be provided (e.g. in work benefits) when taking up low paid positions, which may require a collaborative approach beyond Job Centre Plus, in particular housing services:

*'The JC+ need to sit down with people like myself to find out how much I need to live on, what benefits I get, what I would need to live on from a job and then I can work out what minimum wages I can apply for jobs for. If I got a minimum wage job, do I get help, paying my rent from the housing office, or does it just stop? I know the JSA stops. Advisers need to sit down with those people who have been unemployed for a while to work out these things, to figure out what they can afford, what assistance they can get, what training there is available.'* (Female, 30's)

#### Barriers to employment – complex personal problems

- 4.25 From the analysis of interviews and focus groups, it was apparent that many long term unemployed people may face multiple personal and social challenges which may inhibit them from finding work. Some of the personal challenges identified by informants to this review included language barriers, family problems, past-offending and age:

*'I need a job. But I need to help with speaking language to help me.'* (Male, 40's)

*'..... I do wonder sometimes if my age has something to do with it all. I am of an age nearing retirement and pension so I do wonder.'* (Female, 50's)

*'I have had a lot of family challenges which have not helped. I have had a violent partner which has been difficult. I left him a few weeks ago and things have been very up and down since then.'* (Female, 20's)

*'I look after my granddad who has dementia... I did not like the care he was getting. I go there at 8am and help to get his breakfast, and he can shower himself and things... I also look after my granddaughter.... '* (Female, 40's)

*'Yes, if you're an offender, that's definitely an issue [in getting a job].'* (Male, 50's)

- 4.26 What this clearly demonstrates is that some unemployed people may need additional help and support, beyond training and skills development (and associated provider agencies) to help put them in a position to be able to look for work.

#### Barriers to employment - stigma of being unemployed

- 4.27 Throughout the interviews and focus groups with unemployed people, it was apparent that many felt there was a personal stigma to being unemployed which was perceived at a number of levels. Some clearly felt a personal stigma to being unemployed and were reticent in being seen to access services which might identify them as such:

*'People who are out of work may tell their closest friends that they are out of work, but they don't tell people outside of their closest circle, they wouldn't tell a girl that they had met for example. My friends know that I sign-on but outside of that I would never ever tell someone I am signing on, I am too embarrassed for that. When I am coming (to the Job Centre) I always run in as I don't want to be seen coming in this building... I don't want people to know. And then the guards stop you when you do get here and ask you when your appointment is – I mean really, do you really think I would be here if I didn't need to be?' (Male 30's)*

4.28 Others perceived that potential employers also attached stigma to the long term unemployed:

*'... if you have been out of work for a period of time, that's the barrier, they see your CV and they don't like that. They ask what you what were you doing during that time?' (Female, 30's)*

*'The real barrier though is that people do not want to employ someone who has been unemployed for so long.' (Female, 40's)*

*'... but the issue is that employers do tend to attach a stigma to the long term unemployed as they want to know what you have been doing and why you have been unemployed for that period of time. (Female, 40's)*

4.29 And more generally, there was a perception that there was a stigma associated to living in Tottenham which was prohibitive to them in finding work:

*'I think that there is something about that, that employers look at people from Tottenham differently, that they are a bit rough or something. Since we have had the riots back in the 80s there is a stigma I think, the fact that you live in Tottenham. I have been doing a lot of voluntary work and there are people there with degrees and everything but they are from South London, Hertfordshire and you think why are not local Tottenham people in some of these positions... .'*  
(Female, 50's)

*'I think living in Tottenham is barrier to employment, you don't even want to put it on your CV. To be honest, I cut it out.'* (Female, 40's)

*'I never say the areas that I live in when I am applying for jobs.... I just say that I live in North London.'* (Female, 30's)

*'I want to say that I am very proud to live in Tottenham, but I do think that there is a prejudice toward the people that live in the area to an extent.'* (Female, 40's)

4.30 Further still, some media portrayals of those in receipt of state benefits compounded the stigma to being unemployed:

*'These programmes like Benefits Street do not help, they make it look like people enjoy being on benefits, but you don't, I don't know anyone who enjoys being unemployed and would rather work as anything rather than be unemployed. It makes people look at you like you are piece of dirt off their shoe.'* (Female, 30's)



4.31 What is clear is that such perceptions of stigma can impact on the confidence and self-esteem of job seekers which may inhibit their ability to find employment or training opportunities.

#### Evidence from partners

4.32 A conference style session was held with local providers to help understand the challenges that they face in assisting the long term unemployed, and to help identify future strategies that may assist their work. The session looked at a number of questions:

- What are the challenges that local agencies face in supporting long term unemployed?
- Are there any gaps in services in those services supporting the long term unemployed?
- Are there any opportunities for local agencies to work more collaboratively to better support long term unemployed people?
- What role can the council play in supporting change among providers?

#### The challenges that local agencies face in supporting long term unemployed

4.33 A number of significant challenges were identified by local partners in supporting long term unemployed, many of which correspond to those issues identified by unemployed people themselves;

- Dwindling resource pool with agencies competing for funds;
- Prejudice of employers that long-term unemployed face in looking for work;
- Numerous funding streams can lead to duplication and a perception that services are uncoordinated;
- Low pay and zero-hours contracts (offer of employment must be better than unemployment);
- IT access and support;
- Improving the perception of Tottenham among potential employers.

#### Are there any gaps in services in those services supporting the long term unemployed?

4.34 In the discussions among partners, a number of gaps were identified in the local service offer to long term unemployed:

- Many long term unemployed face multiple and complex challenge in gaining employment which require more intensive 1-1 support, how widely is this available locally?
- Mental health is a significant barrier for some people finding work, and there needs to be a more coordinated response to this locally, particularly in training provided to support workers;
- More childcare services, particularly in the evening and weekends when part-time work may be available.

#### Are there any opportunities for local agencies to work more collaboratively to better support long term unemployed people?

4.35 A number of themes emerged in this area of discussion:

- Improved data sharing across agencies may help to coordinate support provided to unemployed people;
- Working with local employers in a more coordinated way to increase the opportunities available to unemployed people;
- There is a need for a more collaborative approach to the provision and presentation of local skills and training course through local agencies to unemployed people;

- 4.36 Discussions with partners noted that although there were opportunities to collaborative working though there were also a number of barriers:
- Agencies were nationally commissioned which tightly proscribed work;
  - Contracting process also prevented a more holistic response in supporting long-term unemployed;
  - Agencies were in effect in competition with each other to support long term unemployed people which was a barrier to partnership working.

What role can the council play in supporting change among providers?

- 4.37 Discussions with local job support agencies identified a number of ways in which the Council could further assist in support for local long term-unemployed. These included:
- Encourage and support more collective working among providers working toward local priorities;
  - Keep an overview of local skills and training offer and address gaps;
  - Provide work experience opportunities and extend Guaranteed Interview Scheme;
  - Instil social value in local procurement contracts;
  - Supporting local employers in helping local unemployed (e.g. work experience schemes).

# Conclusions and recommendations

1. There is a need to establish a forum where local job search agencies (e.g. Job Centre Plus, Work programme Providers, Haringey Employment & Skills Team, Voluntary Sector Agencies and registered key Housing Providers) can network, share information and develop a more coordinated response to support the needs of local long term unemployed people. It is suggested that this is a sub group of the **Employment and Skills Board** and reports directly to it.

Once established, it is clear that this **job support forum** should be task centred and aim to resolve a number of working priorities which should include:

- How to improve data sharing data across for more effective identification and targeted support for local long term unemployed;
  - The identification of any gaps in the local skills training offer to unemployed people and to develop shared and coordinated response;
  - How local agencies can work together more effectively by aligning priorities and pooling resources to develop a more coordinated response to support long term unemployed people - this could encompass **targeting** the particular needs of specific groups of long term unemployed people (e.g. single parents, those with criminal records, those aged 50 and over and young people) or the specific **employment aspirations** of unemployed people (e.g. construction industry, retail, office);
  - How the range of training and development opportunities available should be collated and presented bringing together the local skills and training offer in a more accessible and coherent way to the long term unemployed;
  - To identify good practice (outcomes) in supporting local unemployed people and to share this across the job support network;
  - To coordinate approaches to local businesses to extend and improve local job opportunities and or work experience opportunities for the long term unemployed.
2. People in long term unemployment may face multiple barriers to finding work and therefore present with more complex needs. In this context, long term unemployed require intensive longer-term support across a wide range of services to address all these needs and thus a more **coordinated** and joined up approach is integral to effective support. Whilst there were many examples of good **joint working across services** to deliver joined up advice and support to unemployed people, there were a number of gaps and areas where service improvement would be beneficial to assisting long term unemployed;
    - a) Advisers at Job Centre Plus and local unemployed people both identified that it would be helpful to have **housing advice and support** available within Job Centre Plus to provide such specialist on-site support to help clients assess the viability of potential work opportunities and possible impact on welfare benefits;

- b) Quicker and more effective processing of **Housing Benefit** claims to ensure that claimants receive the benefits that they are entitled to and that any adjustments are made quickly to ensure claimants do not go in to debt;
  - c) Evidence from providers and unemployed single parents identified the lack of **childcare** as a significant gap in supporting local unemployed people. Of particular concern was the lack of provision in the **evening and weekends**, when more part-time positions were available. A more strategic oversight and commissioning strategy of childcare provision may be needed.
  - d) Improved linkage between job support agencies and local education and training providers (e.g. CONEL and HALS).
3. Whilst there is clearly some work taking place to support those with **mental health** problems back in to work (e.g. employability course offered through MIND, Individual Placement and Support (IPS) service), providers noted that this issue would benefit from a more strategic response involving all job support agencies and BEHMHT to:
- a) Provide greater recognition and awareness of this issue within existing support programmes;
  - b) Upscale local capacity and coordinate a response to this issue;
  - c) Provide further training to local job support providers to help in the identification and onward referral of clients with experiencing mental ill health;
  - d) Aid the identification of those with an undiagnosed mental health condition and the range of support available.
4. There is a need to develop **work experience opportunities** among the long term unemployed as these can help to build confidence, benchmark skills and identify additional training needs. Four key areas for development identified within the review included:
- a) To substantially increase the volume and quality of work placement opportunities available locally;
  - b) That there needs to be a more coordinated approach by local job support agencies to local employers in seeking work placement / job opportunities (e.g. to avoid duplication and streamline efforts);
  - c) That the Council (and Homes for Haringey) should lead by example and establish an explicit work experience programme for local long term unemployed, and should also encourage other public sector and key employers to follow suit;
  - d) That the Council should consult and engage with local businesses (especially small to medium size) to identify what support they would need to extend and improve work experience opportunities for local long-term unemployed people.
5. It was evident from the submissions of both job support providers and from unemployed people themselves that the transition from unemployment to work can require significant social and economic adjustments. The evidence would suggest that there is a need for greater **transitional support** to help the long term unemployed adjust to and sustain new employment. This support should include:
- a) Additional financial assistance where there is a lag between the curtailment of benefits and receipt of first pay cheque;
  - b) Benefits advice and guidance to help people understand the changes that will result from new employment (e.g. housing benefit, council tax exemptions, tax credits);
  - c) Budgeting and financial planning advice (how to manage money), this should include the promotion of the local credit union and financial services available to the unemployed and those on low incomes.

6. Evidence from Council officers, Job Centre Plus and from unemployed people themselves highlighted local disparities in the level of careers advice provided to unemployed people. This suggested that there is a need for the development of a local **careers guidance strategy** to ensure that:
  - a) There is consistent and comprehensive careers education and guidance to young people throughout schooling;
  - b) Careers guidance continues to be available to adults and those seeking work.
  
7. One of the most significant barriers to work is the level of pay offered to those in long term unemployment. From the evidence of the long term unemployed, it was noted that many instances, it would not be financially viable to take on part-time or even full time employment once rent and other essentials had been accounted for. The Council was noted to be committed to the provision of the London Living Wage, though the Committee was unsure of the degree to which this applied to contractors (and sub contractors) and if this could be effectively monitored. In this context, the Committee recommended that:
  - a) The Council and its partners should continue to press for more widespread adoption of **London Living Wage** to increase the viability of working options for unemployed people;
  - b) The Council should undertake an audit of **council contracts** to fully assess the degree to which the London Living Wage is paid to employees;
  - c) Undertake further work to assess what support is currently provided for those that are **in low waged work** and identify priorities for additional support and how this can be provided across the job support market.
  
8. (i) Members of the panel were encouraged by the work of the **Haringey Employment and Skills Team (HEST)** in providing in-depth support and advice to local unemployed people. It was felt that this intensive model of support, as well as access to practical services (e.g. IT services), best suited the needs of the long term unemployed. Many long-term unemployed people however, seemed unaware of this service and the support that it provided, and it was thus recommended that:
  - a) HEST would benefit from **improved communications** and promotion to improve the accessibility of the services it provides;
  - b) The presence of a HEST adviser (sessional) within **Job Centre Plus** may help to improve the interlinking and onward referral between these services;
  - c) The operation of HEST at **additional sites** outside of Northumberland Park may contribute to improved accessibility of this service.

(ii) The Committee noted that there has been financial uncertainty around the future funding of HEST for a number of years which was detrimental to the operation of the service. It appears that such operational uncertainty will however continue in the short term as funding is only assured until 2016/17 within the current MTFS. In this context, the Committee recommended that:

  - a) That increased income through S106 monies should be used to put HEST on a more stable financial footing to enable it to consolidate and extend the valuable services it provides to local unemployed people.
  
9. Interviews with local unemployed people highlighted the centrality of **access to IT computers and the internet** to support their job search activity. The Committee noted that those claiming Job Seekers Allowance were required to undertake a minimum number of hours in job search activity each week and that applications for jobs (for whatever grade) almost exclusively needed to be completed on line. With many of the long term unemployed being unable to afford a PC or have internet access at home,

local libraries and other community access points had become important hubs for local job search activity. It is apparent however that these sites were often crowded (especially out of school hours) and where access can be limited (1 hour slots). In addition, many of the long term unemployed required ongoing IT advice and support which was not available at such community hubs and therefore further restricted their job search activity. It is therefore recommended that:

- a) Providers may wish to consider shared or pooled services to (1) further promote PC and Internet access the borough (2) provide more intensive and ongoing IT support targeted to those with less developed IT skills.
- b) There should be improved signposting to IT services and support among providers.

10. In evidence from providers, a **Guaranteed Interview Schemes** for those meeting essential criteria for job vacancies was noted to be a positive development which encouraged local unemployed people to focus and apply for local jobs. Whilst acknowledging that awareness of this scheme may be low and there are currently limited suitable vacancies, the Committee recommended that:

- a) There needs to be further promotion of the Haringey Guaranteed Interview Scheme to ensure that relevant vacancies are actively promoted with local job support market providers;
- b) That once a working model of this scheme is re-established, it is replicated within Homes for Haringey and suggested to other local partners;
- c) That the Council consider opening up this scheme to vacancies recruited through agencies.

11. The Committee noted that Job Centre Plus is centrally commissioned and that service levels are prescribed accordingly, and in this context there may be little scope for local service variations. It was also noted that Job Centre Plus staff face a difficult task in both monitoring compliance with required job search activities (and thus eligibility for benefits) as well as providing personalised advice and support for job search activity. Evidence from service users would appear to indicate that whilst **Job Centre Plus** was the key service for accessing training and support, **awareness and access to such training courses** was perceived to be 'ad hoc' which was mostly dependent on the experience of their personal adviser or the relationship that they had with their personal adviser. In addition, the Committee noted that there were instances where local unemployed people missed out on training opportunities as JCP advisers did not have authority to sign-off relatively small sums of money for training (as higher authorisation was required which took too long). It is therefore recommended that:

- a) A new system for promoting work and training opportunities is developed for local job seekers at JCP;
- b) A higher financial limit /lower threshold is established to enable JCP advisers greater flexibility to authorise funding to support training courses for unemployed.

12. Interviews with local unemployed people noted that job search activities were hampered by the **cost of travel**. Whilst some had access to reduced priced Oyster Cards and received support for travel to interviews, awareness of such schemes and take up was by no means universal. It was therefore recommended that:

- a) Further work should be undertaken to promote those schemes or agencies which are able to provide financial assistance for travel for unemployed people (e.g. improved signposting between agencies).

13. A significant personal barrier to gaining work among the long term unemployed was **lack of confidence and low self esteem**. Many providers noted that the long term unemployed required a '**hand holding and confidence building**' to assist them

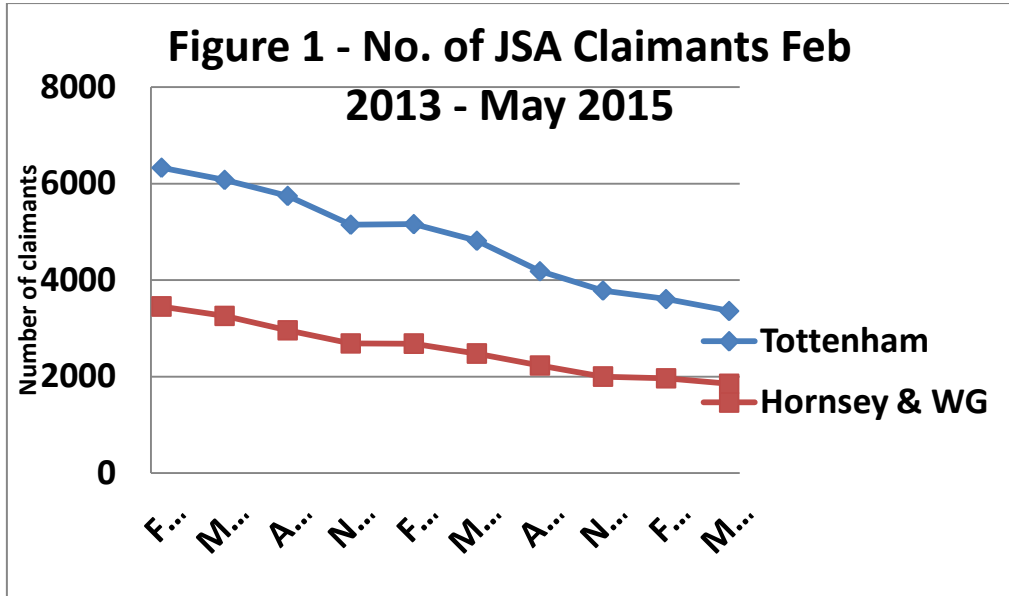
through job search processes, however these 'softer' aspects of job support services were often **absent within commissioning contracts**. How local services can help to build confidence and self esteem among long term unemployed therefore remains a critical question for the local job support market. The Committee noted that the successful completion of any training (be it skills based, therapy or art course) could help to improve confidence and lead to improved employment outcomes. The Committee therefore recommended:

a) That the Council assess how access all adult learning courses could be improved to help long term unemployed move a step closer to the job market;

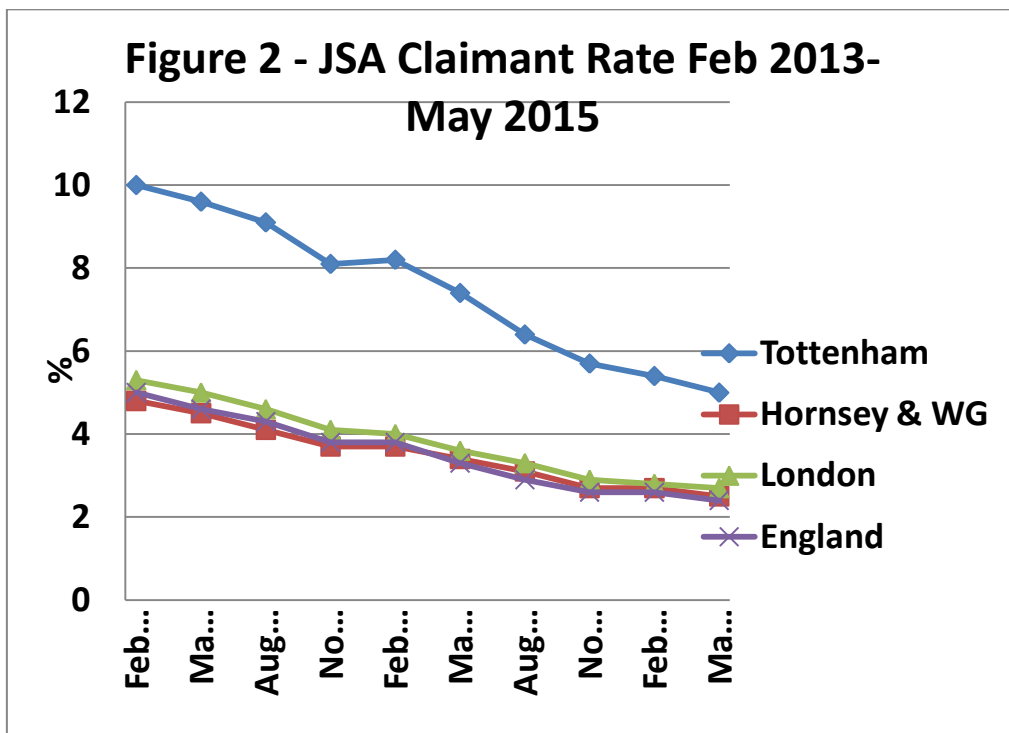
14. Many of the long term unemployed interviewed within this project perceived that there was a **stigma to living in Tottenham** which disadvantaged them in their job search activities. In this context, it was felt that more should be done to promote a positive image of Tottenham and of its residents – and how more generalised negative perceptions of benefit claimants (for example, as portrayed through *Benefits Street*) should be countered. In addition, both interviewees and those attending focus groups also noted that in some instances, they felt **stigmatised as a service user** at some local job support providers. Job support market providers themselves also noted that further work is needed with employers to demonstrate the value and opportunities of employing those who have been in long term unemployment.
15. The Committee noted that income was derived from **S106 monies** which can be used to support local jobs and training opportunities (£300k had been received and a further £600k in pipeline). In addition, the Committee noted that **planning conditions** and **procurement** processes can be used generate real opportunities for increasing work and employment for local people, where there is sufficient monitoring in place to support this. Whilst beyond the remit of the Committee, it was noted that further work and training opportunities should be included and delivered through regeneration procurement activities of the Council.
16. Throughout the course of this review it was noted that there was a policy tension as to how best the Council and partners should tackle the cycle of worklessness. There was a perception among some informants to this review that it may be more cost effective to target young unemployed people over those in long term unemployment. A critical question therefore remains, in that how does the Council and local job support market ensure that the needs of the longer term unemployed continue to be recognised and adequately supported against competing priority groups and a limited pot of resources?

# Appendices

## Appendix A – Figures 1-8



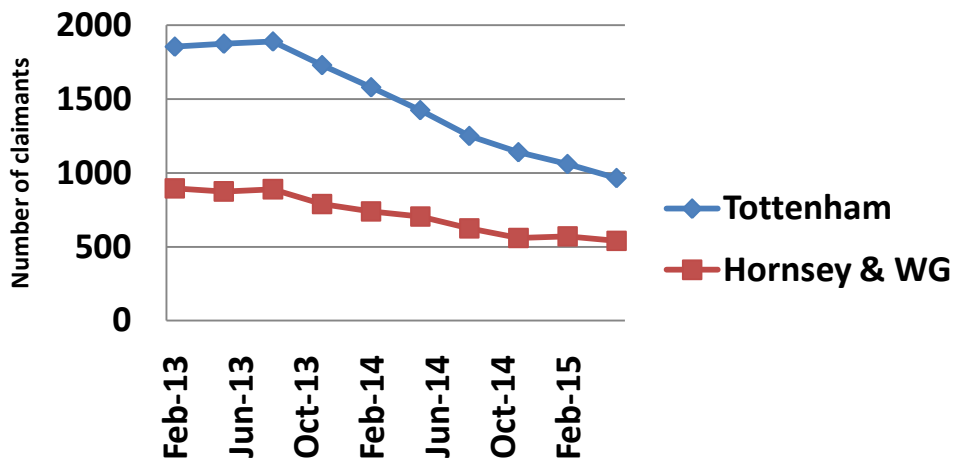
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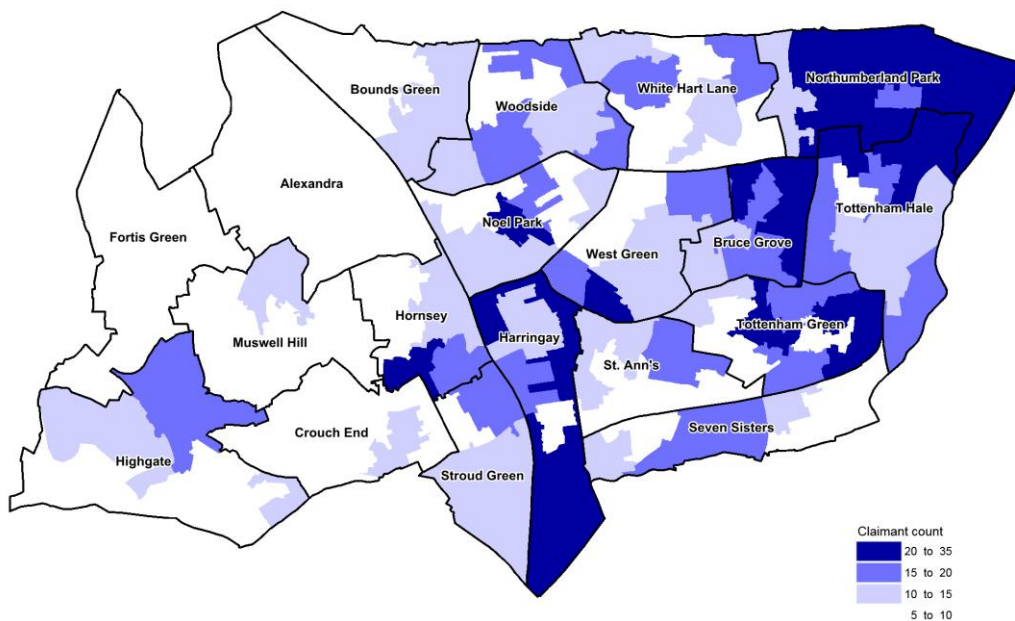
**Figure 3 - Number of JSA Claimants with claim +12 months duration (February 2013 to May 2015)**



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**Figure 4 – Number of JSA claimants in Haringey wards – duration of claim +12 months**

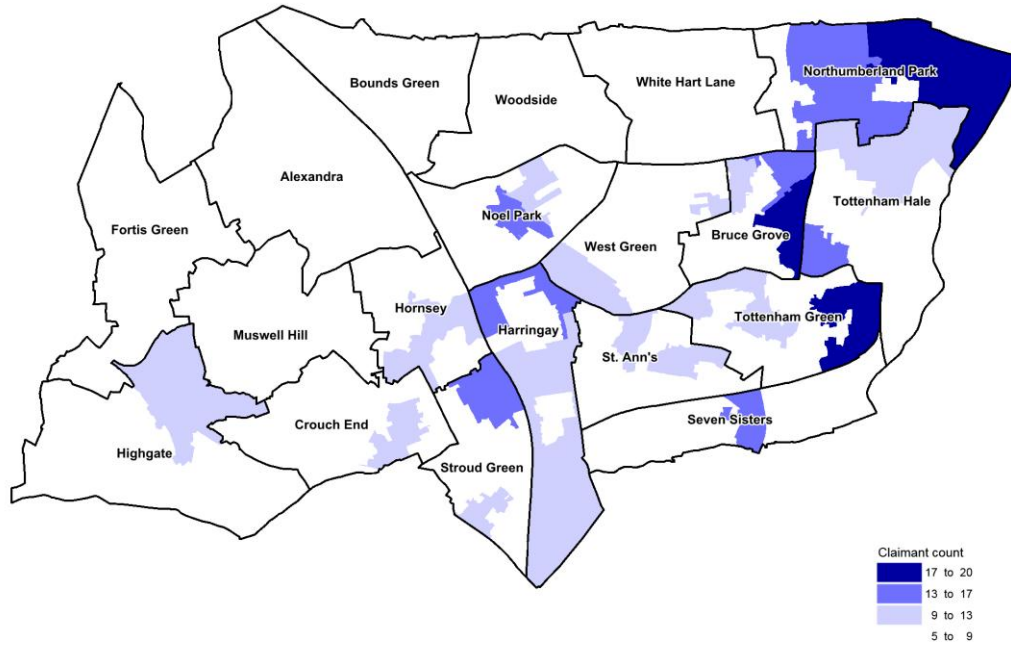
Number of claimants claiming for 1 year or over (LSOA) May 2015



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## Figure 5 – Number of JSA claimants in Haringey – duration of claim + 2years

Number of claimants claiming for 2 years or over (LSOA) - May 2015

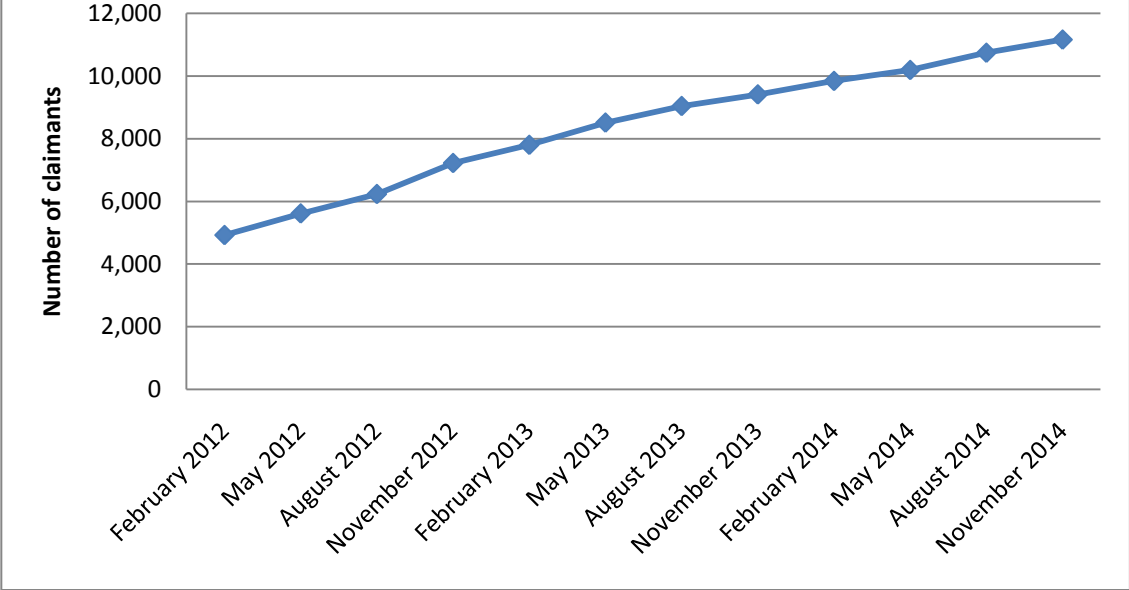


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**Figure 6 - JSA claimants by age duration (June 2015) source NOMISWEB**

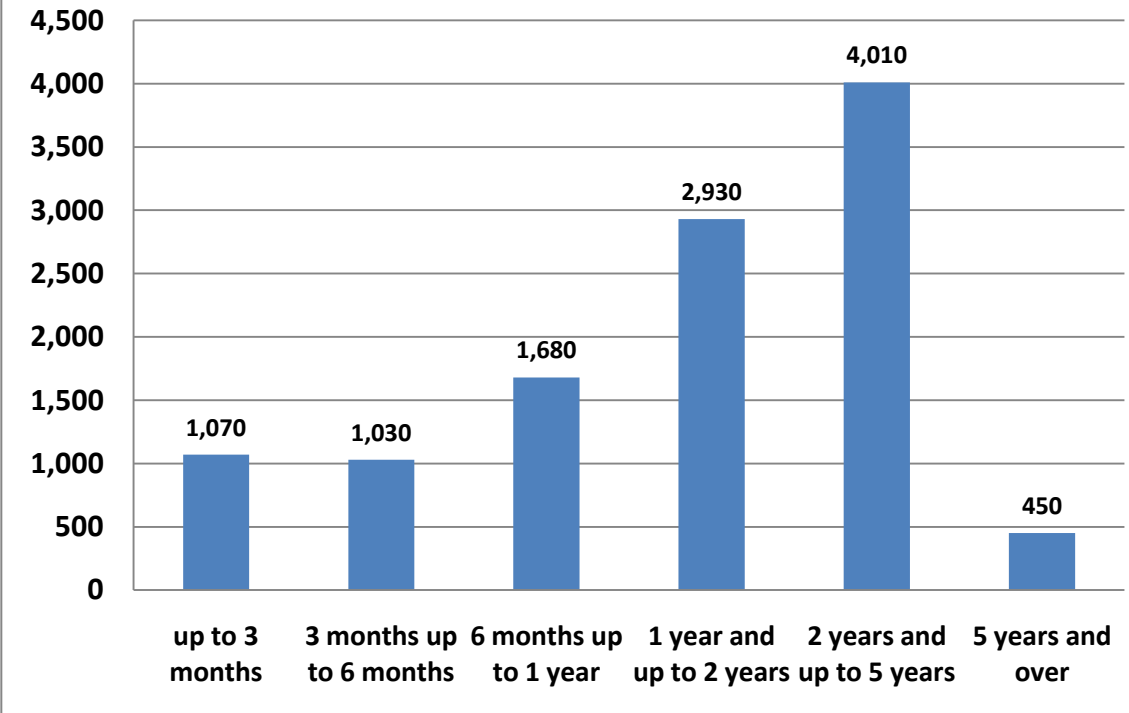
	<b>Haringey (level)</b>	<b>Haringey (%)</b>	<b>London (%)</b>	<b>Great Britain (%)</b>
<b>Aged 16 to 64</b>				
Total	5,005	2.7	1.9	1.7
Up to 6 months	2,650	1.4	1.1	1.0
Over 6 and up to 12 months	915	0.5	0.3	0.3
over 12 months	1,440	0.8	0.5	0.5
<b>Aged 18 to 24</b>				
Total	725	3.1	2.4	2.5
Up to 6 months	515	2.2	1.7	1.7
Over 6 and up to 12 months	130	0.6	0.4	0.5
over 12 months	75	0.3	0.2	0.3
<b>Aged 25 to 49</b>				
Total	3,075	2.5	1.9	1.9
Up to 6 months	1,650	1.4	1.1	1.0
Over 6 and up to 12 months	565	0.5	0.3	0.3
over 12 months	860	0.7	0.5	0.5
<b>Aged 50 to 64</b>				
Total	1,205	3.4	2.1	1.4
Up to 6 months	485	1.3	0.9	0.7
Over 6 and up to 12 months	215	0.6	0.3	0.2
over 12 months	505	1.4	0.9	0.5

**Figure 7 - Employment Support Allowance Claimants in Haringey (February 2012 to November 2014)**



source NOMISWEB

**Figure 8- Duration of Employment Support Allowance Claim (as of November 2014)**



source NOMISWEB

## **Appendix B – List of project participants**

### **Council Officers**

**Dan Hawthorn**, Assistant Director for Regeneration  
**Jacquie McGeachie**, Assistant Director for Human Resources  
**Stephen Kelly**, Assistant Director for Planning  
**Hugh Sharkey**, Assistant Director for Procurement  
**Vicky Clark**, Economic Development Consultant  
**Ambrose Quashie**, Economic Development Officer Policy & Projects  
**Denise Gandy**, Welfare Reform, Director of Housing Demand  
**Sylvia Lewin**, Families First, JCP Adviser  
**Robert Bennett**, Head of Service, Haringey Adult Learning Service  
**Sharon Bolton**, Delivery Manager, Haringey Employment & Skills team  
**Sarah Hart**, Public Health Commissioner (Substance misuse)  
**Sean May**, Principal Adviser, Partnerships and Developments  
**Cleo Andronikou**, Housing Related Support Commissioning Officer

### **Council Partners**

**Phyllis Fealy**, Job Centre Plus  
**Jackie Chapman**, Director of Employability and Employer Engagement, College of Haringey, Enfield, & North East London  
**Nikki Kelly**, Employment and Skills Manager, Tottenham Hotspur Foundation  
**Fiona Apio-Matanda**, Reed in Partnership  
**Ellie King**, Performance and Delivery Manager, Ingeus  
**Dominic Arnall**, Business Manager, Shaw Trust  
**Henrietta Catherine**, Public Sector Partnerships Manager, Prince's Trust  
**Aminata Diaby**, Senior Project Officer, Greater London Assembly  
**Chinyere Ugwu**, Community Development Director, Homes for Haringey  
Hyacinth Foster, Employment Programmes Officer  
**Emmanuel Coker**, Metropolitan Housing  
**John Egbo**, Director, North London Partnership Consortium  
**Marc Molloy**, Family Mosaic Housing  
**Tony Azubike**, Senior Operations Manager, Reed in Partnership