NHS Lambeth commissions a range of services for people living with HIV including hospital inpatient and outpatient treatment, specialist mental health services, specialised community nursing, community-based care and support services (jointly with LBL), nursing home rehabilitation and palliative care, an infant feeding scheme, support for families and children living with and / or affected by HIV, primary and secondary HIV prevention and health promotion. Because of the mobility of the HIV population, nearly all services are commissioned through partnership arrangements with other PCTs or Councils.

There are currently 2651 people living with HIV in Lambeth (2008 SOPHID data). The Borough’s prevalence rate of almost 1.8 per 1000 adults is the highest in the UK. Epidemiological and demographic details are included in the separate briefing paper. In terms of understanding service provision, it is worth noting that approx 75% of people living with HIV in Lambeth are men who have sex with men (MSM). The other significant group mainly infected through the heterosexual route are black Africans.

**Prevention and health promotion services**

Primary prevention is commissioned through the Pan-London HIV Prevention Partnership, led by NHS Kensington & Chelsea. The PLHIVPP commissions four programmes for MSM, African communities, small and large media (also for people already living with HIV) and monitoring and evaluation.

A complementary primary prevention programme for African communities (the SAFER Partnership) is commissioned by NHS Lambeth on behalf of NHS Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham (LSL).

Free condoms are widely available through mainstream sexual health services but are also available in social venues used by MSM. There is a separate condom distribution scheme covering black businesses and social venues.

Free needle exchange for injecting drug users provided by South London & Maudsley Trust (SL&M) has reduced new HIV infections through this route almost to zero and is a prevention success story.

The Lambeth and Southwark Sexual Health and HIV Promotion Team runs local media campaigns and other promotional events eg World AIDS Day and provides training for health professionals in reduction of stigma and identification of those at risk of HIV.
Secondary care
HIV treatment is commissioned by the HIV Consortium, based in London Specialised Commissioning Group, on behalf of all London PCTs. There two main centres in SE London at the Harrison Centre, St Thomas’ Hospital and the Caldecot Centre, King’s College Hospital. HIV treatment is also provided at University Hospital Lewisham, QEH Woolwich and Beckenham Hospital. Approx 50% of people living with HIV have historically received treatment at centres in North London in Westminster and Camden. The majority of treatment is provided on an outpatient basis and approx 75% of expenditure is on antiretroviral drugs which have turned HIV from a deadly to a chronic condition.

LSL PCTs commission the CascAID Team, a specialist HIV mental health team, from SL&M. This team has a lower threshold than other mental health services and provides a range of mental health treatments to people living with HIV who have mental health needs.

Community-based services

Community nursing
The Community HIV Nursing Team, part of the Three Boroughs Team, supports people with HIV and complex physical and social problems. Referrals are mainly from the HIV centres. All centres likely to refer, whether local or not, have information about the team. The team is the gatekeeper for LSL PCTs’ budgets for rehabilitation and palliative care placements mainly at the Mildmay Mission (NHS Tower Hamlets is the lead commissioner). There is scope for exploring with Lambeth and other Councils whether integrated assessment and pooling of placement budgets could reduce duplication and increase choice and cost-effectiveness.

Care and support services
The majority of care and support services are commissioned through the South London HIV Partnership (SLHIVP) led by NHS Croydon. All South London PCTs and Councils are members apart from NHS Bromley and Council. The services were redesigned and retendered in 2007/08 with new contracts starting in [April 2008]. Details of individual services, activity and costs are contained in the attached spreadsheet. Access is through First Point or service users may self-refer.

Some services are new and have had issues in getting started. SL&M struggled to provide an individual service coordination service. This contract has now been let to Metro which provides First Point. The Health Support Service provided by Terrence Higgins Trust (THT) has been slow to start but is now gaining increased referrals.

Concerns have been raised with Council members about the availability of peer support following the decommissioning of Positive Place in Jul 2009. Since that
time, Lambeth residents living with HIV have to been able to access separately-commissioned peer support groups provided by African Advocacy Foundation, London Ecomunical AIDS Trust and Positive Parents and Children. The SLHIVP has taken steps to develop interim arrangements prior to retendering the service. A mapping of all groups providing peer support in South London (SL) has been undertaken. Many of the groups identified were too small and undeveloped to bid for funding under NHS procurement rules. A hub and spoke model has therefore been proposed with coordination and payments managed by THT. At a meeting on 18 Nov 2009, a partnership charter was agreed with ten SL groups offering peer support including the existing groups above. The new arrangements will commence on 1 Dec 2009 for six months. Data from the interim scheme will inform the future model of peer support across SL and a decision about retendering.

Two groups (the Junction, Bromley, and Body & Soul, Camden) have made it known that they are receiving extra attendance as a result of the decommissioning of Positive Place although no formal approach has been made. The Junction was invited to the 18 Nov meeting organised by NHS Croydon but did not attend. This service is in Bromley which is outside the SLHIVP. The Partnership makes no charge for Bromley residents attending SLHIVP services. Body & Soul is outside the SLHIVP geographical area and its commissioning relationship is with a North London PCT. North London does not have a corresponding HIV Partnership to the SLHIVP and, as with Bromley, the SLHIVP does not charge for North London residents attending SL-funded services.

**SEL HIV Network**
A clinical network links all the centres and units in SE London and is open to all stakeholders. This provides a forum for discussion of all issues relating to HIV treatment, care and support. Funding for the HIV and related Sexual Health Networks is not yet secure with the main funders currently LSL PCTs. Assuming that this can be secured, there is scope to use the network to strengthen relationships between health and social care, develop the care pathway for the cohort of long-term HIV survivors who are aging and improve the secondary / primary care interface.

**Conclusion**
This briefing has aimed to give Council members an overview of a very complex service area. It is acknowledged that there are challenges in delivering the SLHIVP programme but it should be noted that these are being addressed, although it takes time to collect information and carry out adequate consultation with small voluntary and community groups and with service users. It is hoped that the current interim arrangements will lead ultimately to a better service and allow more entrants into the provision of HIV care and support.

Rose Echlin, AD, Commissioning & Care Pathways (UHL)
LSL Alliance