

THE BEACON SCHEME 2008 Assessment Form

Theme	Raising economic prosperity through partnership
Authority	Lancashire County Council
Number	6266

Overall Score Outstanding (6)/Excellent plus (5.5)/Excellent (5)/Very good(4.5)/Good (4)/Above average (3.5)/Average (3)/Weak (2)/Poor (1)		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Score: Very good - 4.5	Score: Excellent - 5	Score: Outstanding - 6

Summary Comments		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
<p>Lancashire has a strong partnership structure that includes a whole range of partners - including district and unitary councils. The vision and strategy has been developed in partnership. Priorities have been developed working in partnership with others. Information will be sought on who is leading and championing these priorities. There is an implementation plan underpinning this strategy. Progress in meeting the SCS and LAA targets is regularly reviewed. Environmental sustainability is included as a part of the work of the partnership. Equalities and diversity is clearly embedded in raising economic prosperity in Lancashire. Actions and outcomes are clearly identified, but mainly appear to be identified at a strategic level. More information is sought on the local level activity and interventions that are being developed in response to the evidence base/target setting that underpins the LAA agreement.</p>	<p>Lancashire were able to evidence the strength and effectiveness of their partnership structure. They showed the breadth of their partnership - and the obvious enthusiasm and commitment of a whole range of different people to making their economic prosperity strategy work. They showed a very positive approach to environmental sustainability - particularly in their projects aimed a local businesses. Equalities and diversity and community cohesion are embedded in their work - and evidenced by the work around the Community pact. The Vision Boards, which are led by the private sector, show an real commitment from that sector to developing and delivering the prosperity agenda in the County. The visit was well organised, provided a good introduction to the work of a highly complicated and complex partnership structure and provided access to a large number of partners in a highly effective and managed process (the Market Place).</p>	<p>This partnership was able to show an impressive record on economic prosperity being delivered in partnership. Lancashire County Council were able to evidence their highly effective partnership structure at work at both the visit and in terms of the presentation. The 'market place' element of the visit showed, in a very short time-frame, the range of partners involved in this partnership and some of the great results it is achieving for its local communities. The shared agenda around economic prosperity was evidenced by the Chief Executive from the District Council who are part of the broader partnership. This authority has its own LSP and strategic imperatives, but these are lined up with the over-riding vision, aims and objectives contained in the Economic Prosperity strategy and the LAA. The partnership is keen to create an environment within which other people can act - and the LAA is not seen as a straight jacket on this action. This is an example of an outstanding Beacon Authority working in partnership to deliver economic prosperity in Lancashire.</p>

Score Summary Table			
	First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Leadership, Vision and Strategy	Excellent - 5	Excellent - 5	Outstanding - 6
Community and Customer Engagement and Empowerment	Excellent - 5	Excellent - 5	Outstanding - 6
Actions	Good - 4	Excellent - 5	Outstanding - 6
Partnerships	Excellent - 5	Excellent plus - 5.5	Outstanding - 6
Outcomes	Good - 4	Good - 4	Outstanding - 6
Sharing Best Practise		Excellent - 5	Outstanding - 6

Leadership, Vision and Strategy (Section 2.2 of the application form)		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Score: Excellent - 5	Score: Excellent - 5	Score: Outstanding - 6
Comments	Comments	Comments
Strong and effective partnership structure identified and an ability to work at a number of different levels - district, unitary, county, sub regional - to ensure that the economic prosperity ambitions are realised. Partners are championing the clear strategy and shared priorities and more information will be sought on how this is undertaken across such a wide range of partners. There is a robust implementation plan underpinning this activity. Climate change is addressed in this partnership arrangement - and businesses are assisted to improve resource and energy efficiency. Equalities and diversity is promoted alongside community cohesion and social inclusion.	The partnership's leadership, vision and strategy were clearly demonstrated in the visit particularly as it is encapsulated in 'Ambition Lancashire'. Working with a broad range of partners - including private sector, community and voluntary and other public sector partners - they were able to show how they are delivering economic prosperity across a large County area. The prioritisation process for the LAA indicators was clearly evidenced, which showed how such a broad group of partners were able to reach consensus on what to include. The Council is involved in the development of 2 Multi Area Agreements - Fylde Coast and Penine Lancashire - which have both required intensive consultative processes and a third under is now under consideration. The challenges, complexity and need for leadership were highlighted in the presentation. The strength of leadership, management and engagement being exercised by the County Council was clearly evidenced at the visit.	The Local Authority takes its leadership role extremely seriously - and this role is well shared between the Leader and the Chief Executive - who showed really effective teamwork during the visit. The partnership makes sure that leadership is collectivised and distributed as appropriate amongst its partners and it is practical and pragmatic. This was well evidenced by style of political leadership shown by the Leader of the Council. The LSP sees itself as the 'leadership team for Lancashire'. The appetite for partnership working extends to the 2 adjoining Unitary authorities. It can also be evidenced in the recent signing of the Pennine Lancashire MAA; the development of an MAA for the Fylde Coast and a third MAA under consideration for the remaining strip of the County. A task group has recently been developed around recession, looking at it from a community leadership perspective to identify what is needed and support those who need it. The public sector is working to make a tangible impact.

Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
How have all the partners - district councils, business, parish plans, voluntary, faith and community - been involved in the development of LAA's and MAA's? How is the implementation plan negotiated, funded and is it sustainable? What lessons have emerged from this work? How effective is the Climate Change programme and what lessons have been learnt already?	It would be helpful if an update could be provided about the MAA's to show further progress. What are the key priorities emerging from this process and how does it differ between areas?	

Community and Customer Engagement and Empowerment (Section 2.3 of the application form)		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Score: Excellent - 5	Score: Excellent - 5	Score: Outstanding - 6
Comments	Comments	Comments
Good range of activities and interventions identified to ensure that local communities and businesses are actively engaged in the development of services aimed at improving economic prosperity. Includes a positive approach to equalities and diversity embedded in this engagement activity.	A range of community and customer engagement activities and interventions were showcased by presentations and through the 'Market Place'. The partnership embraces a number of District level LSP's, each with their own partnership and strategy. It was not clear if there was an agreed community strategy pulling together an agreed approach and objectives across the whole partnership. While the more 'top down' approach - which is being very effective in terms of developing economic prosperity (e.g. work of Lancashire County Developments Ltd, Business Link and Workstart) - was provided, the 'bottom up' activities and interventions e.g participatory budgeting/neighbourhood approaches. The Vision Boards provide the opportunity for the private sector to engage and contribute to the strategy of the partnership. This is an important aspect of this partnership and one that other authorities would be interested in learning more about.	The sustainable community strategy underpins the work of the partnership. There are bottom up approaches underway to ensure that local communities are actively engaged in the work of the partnership. It sees itself as responding to local need and target the areas where the most problems exist. They have undertaken community mapping to provide themselves with a strong intelligence base. There is a County wide community cohesion strategy.

Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
<p>What has the private sector delivered as a result of their engagement in the five business led vision boards - are there any lessons to be learnt? How effective has the Lancashire Local meetings been - who have they reached and how has this been measured? What has 'workstart' achieved, what good practice can be drawn out of this approach and how is this being disseminated?</p>	<p>Is there a community strategy that provides an agreed approach or common standards across the County? What 'bottom up' approaches are being developed around community involvement? Are the private sector involved in delivering activities and interventions e.g Town Centre management or similar initiatives? How is consultation around regeneration schemes undertaken - how are responsibilities shared between the County and District partners?</p>	

Actions (Section 2.4 of the application form)		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Score: Good - 4	Score: Excellent - 5	Score: Outstanding - 6
Comments	Comments	Comments
<p>There is a robust performance management system in place, which has been used for 2 years. It appears to provide a good process for managing the programme. Risk management is a key feature of the work of the partnership - have an LAA risk register. Good mapping of communities shown and a clear relationship between this mapping and action emerging. Some interesting projects identified - including TRAK - aimed at the third sector and getting third sector organisations ready for public sector procurement. It would be really helpful to have some more examples of what is happening on the ground as a result of the evidence of local needs and priority setting exercises. How are key stakeholder partners being persuaded to 'bend the mainstream' into priority areas?</p>	<p>There was clear evidence of a strong performance management system (PERFORM) that provides the information needs of the partnership in terms of identifying areas of poor performance. There is a risk register that is effectively managing risks attaching to the delivery of the LAA targets. The TRAK project was a good example of the partnership working with third sector and social enterprises to get them ready for contracting with the public sector. The range of loan funding available to micro business and SME's through the Rosebud Finance schemes was innovative and providing excellent results. The link up with Business Link and the work around BSSP was providing access to a range of businesses in need of support.</p>	<p>Performance management is taken extremely seriously by the partnership. They have a robust system in place. Partners are able to input into this system. There are reporting structures in place which reflect the requirements of the partnership's structure. This delivers around the LAA indicators. Lancashire Development Company has its own performance management in place to assess delivery against the Board's objectives. Outcome and output figures are available to assess performance, identify risks and take relevant action.</p>

Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
<p>More information on PERFORM - what is it, how does it work, how do partners use it? Who is responsible for the LAA risk register - how are risks assessed, who are they reported to and how is mitigating action implemented? How effective has TRAK been at helping organisations obtain public sector contracts - is there evidence of success yet?</p> <p>What else is the partnership doing at a local level in areas of priority need? What are key partners being persuaded to do around 'bending the mainstream' into priority areas?</p>	<p>Are there some specific examples of 'bending mainstream funding' into local levels? How has this happened and who has been involved in making it effective?</p>	

Partnerships (Section 2.5 of the application form)		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Score: Excellent - 5	Score: Excellent plus - 5.5	Score: Outstanding - 6
Comments	Comments	Comments
<p>Evidence provided of a wide range of partners and partnerships engaged in identifying priorities and multi agency actions to meet these priorities. SCS (Ambition Lancashire) used to develop the vision and strategy and LAA used as a key route to bring partners together around key priorities and targets. Governance structures identified - and a clear process of broad involvement of partners in reviewing progress and setting new targets on an annual basis. A structure chart would be helpful to understand the complicated family of partnerships. How are social and environmental partners involved?</p>	<p>The wide range of partners who were shown to be 'signed up' to 'Ambition Lancashire' (the Sustainable Community Strategy) was a key success of this visit. The levels of enthusiasm and commitment to partnership working was well evidenced - and the breadth of partners - from a young person starting out in business, through members of the local BAME community working to help Asian women back to work to the larger private sector businesses involved in chairing the theme group - was outstanding. Tensions were identified in developing partnership working - but the overall impression provided by District Council officers and members, Business representatives, those local people employed through the Workstart initiative and all the other partners represented was of a shared ambition to improve the lives of local people. This work also extended beyond the County borders to the neighbouring Unitary Authorities.</p>	<p>Partnership working was identified by the presentation team as requiring the development of trust and responsibility; a clear focus on what you are trying to achieve and it takes time, funding and adversity to form and perform. An example was provided of work within a rural District - where foot and mouth has ruined elements of the rural economy. A rural business event has been held to show the opportunities available and help to provide a business support presence in these areas. The 'Adrenaline Gateway' focusing on extreme sports under development is developing a new way to bring people and their money into the rural area.</p>

Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
How are all the various organisations involved in the work of the partnership? Is it possible to ensure that all views are heard in this complicated environment? How effective are the consultative arrangements - are there examples of how priorities have changed as a result?	There were no specific areas of further investigation. The Panel may be interested in hearing further about how this partnership has been able to develop and grow so effectively.	

Outcomes
(Section 2.7 of the application form)

First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Score: Good - 4	Score: Good - 4	Score: Outstanding - 6
Comments	Comments	Comments
Good outcomes are shown from the work of the partnership in terms of raising economic prosperity. Clear evidence shown of the impact of the partnership's work in terms of service delivery and project outcomes. More information is required about what is happening at a local level. No reference made to transport or housing infrastructure development to underpin the economic activity. No reference is made to businesses being surveyed to assess levels of satisfaction with vacancies filled with skilled people or of the business support simplification process.	This is a really impressive partnership that is getting results in terms of economic prosperity. The 'added value' of the partnership needs pulling out a bit more effectively. What would have happened anyway without all this hard work. How does it measure its impact? Does it survey businesses to establish if the work involved in developing the skills of local people is ensuring that there vacancies are being filled? Are these progression routes for local people being created, used and having results? How are hard to reach people being identified and reached for initiatives?	Clear evidence was shown about joined up working - which is showing effective 'value added' outcomes. The initiatives supported by the partnership are flexible to meet changing needs - e.g. new loan arrangements within the current financial environment. Priorities are effectively brought together with housing and transport requirements - to ensure that 'Ambition Lancashire' is met.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
What is happening locally to deliver the economic prosperity agenda? What is happening around transport and housing infrastructure development? What is happening at a local level to improve economic prosperity? What has been undertaken with businesses in terms of helping them to fill their vacancies? Has anything been developed around business support services - via LEGI or other routes?	The 'value added' agenda needs to be pulled out. How is local activity in the Districts being 'joined up' with the initiatives highlighted - Workstart, Rosebud loans, apprenticeships, etc. What is the impact of LEGI? How are the housing and transport priorities, which are managed by others, approached to ensure that they compliment the 'Ambition Lancashire' approach?	

Factors that underpin your success
(Section 4.1 of the application form) (First Sift intentionally blank)

First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Score:	Score:	Score:

Comments	Comments	Comments
	The partnership were able to evidence the factors that underpin their success very well.	This partnership will be able to disseminate good practice around business engagement, working with Business Link, Chamber of Commerce and the private sector. It can also show how effective working can be developed within 2 tier authorities and this can also read across to Unitary Authorities. The County also contains a diverse range of authorities, both urban and rural, and communities and exhibits extremes of deprivation and affluence. Working in these environments can be shared with others facing similar challenges.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
	There were no further areas of investigation.	

Successful initiatives (Section 4.2 of the application form) (First Sift intentionally blank)		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Comments	Comments	Comments
	The partnership showcased a range of highly successful initiatives at the visit.	No further comment.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
	There were no further areas of investigation.	

Who are the key target audiences that would benefit from hearing your key messages? (Section 4.3 of the application form) (First Sift intentionally blank)		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Comments	Comments	Comments
	The partnership are clear about what they have to tell others and who they would be telling from their application form. Evidence from the visit showed that they are well able to present information in an imaginative and interesting way that would suit the needs of these various audiences.	No further comment.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
	There are no further areas of investigation.	

Beyond the national Learning Exchange conference and Open Day, how might you work with other Beacons within your theme to maximise the impact of your learning activities?
(Section 4.4 of the application form) (First Sift intentionally blank)

First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Comments	Comments	Comments
	This is a highly experienced County Council, who has had previous successes in gaining Beacon Status. The organisation of the visit, the focus of the presentations on answering the assessors questions and particularly the organisation of the Market Place, leads to the conclusion that they are able to maximise the impact.	No further comment.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
	There are no further areas of investigation.	

What experience does your authority have with sharing lessons with others? Give examples of where your authority has supported others to improve
(Section 4.5 of the application form) (First Sift intentionally blank)

First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Comments	Comments	Comments
	As has already been identified, this authority has a high level of experience of sharing lessons with others. They should no have any difficulty in sharing lessons from this thematic area.	No further comment.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
	There were no further areas of investigation.	