

## THE BEACON SCHEME 2008 APPLICATION FORM

PART 1 - AUTHORITY INFORMATION	
Authority Name	<b>Lancashire County Council</b>
Equality standard rating	
Beacon Theme	<b>Raising economic prosperity through partnership</b>
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This application can be made available on the IDeA web site once Beacon awards have been made	<b>No</b>
Application Number	<b>6266</b>
Application Status	<b>Submitted</b>

### 2.1 Please summarise the excellent practice for which you are seeking Beacon Status.

Our pioneering approach to reducing worklessness highlights how the public sector can transform individual lives and stimulate economic growth. Seizing our role as Lancashire's community leader, we brought together previously disparate elements of the public sector to forge truly joined-up partnerships and deliver clear, objective results.

In 2006 more than 100,000 people were claiming an 'out-of-work' benefit in Lancashire. We made reducing worklessness a top priority in our Local Area Agreement knowing that innovation would prove crucial in tackling this complex policy issue. Where once agencies worked in isolation and focused on new or recent benefit claimants, we spearheaded a new strategy with Job Centre Plus and other partners to target long-term recipients. Multi-agency co-operation meant we could spot gaps in the system and spread good practice more easily across the sector. Together, we created a detailed action plan to deliver a tough new LAA stretch target: Get 480 people on incapacity or lone-parent benefit for more than six-months into the workplace. The result is two unique flagship schemes with national significance as vehicles for local government tackling worklessness.

Communicating with the customer is crucial to any business plan. We sent 14,000 mailings to long-term benefit claimants and the respondents formed our core target group. A creative and comprehensive marketing strategy was brought to bear: We mailed job information to lone parents at the start of the new school year, held job fairs in boroughs where no employment services were previously offered and promoted the public sector to black and minority ethnic job seekers.

Our micro-targeting tactics sparked a remarkable response. We achieved the challenging LAA stretch-target a full nine months ahead of schedule and helped almost 500 residents from some of Lancashire's most deprived communities find sustainable employment at a unit cost of £28.

As a major employer and service provider we recognise how the public sector can shape economic activity. How could we spur job growth by providing invaluable experience to new job seekers? After listening to customers, we led the way, with Jobcentre Plus, in developing the first "Work-Start" trial in the public sector and promised 90 placements for 2008-09. So far, ten are already employed as a result of the scheme. Now we're sharing this good practice across the public sector.

Innovation continues to drive our interventions in the market for skills, training and jobs. We've targeted apprenticeship recruitment by launching a multi-platform communications campaign in schools and communities. We created new grant programmes to boost the Third Sector's capacity to help the long-term unemployed move into work. We've looked beyond the obvious to identify hidden barriers to work, like the lack of awareness among Job Centre advisers of local public transport routes. Our joined-up approach not only spotted this gap but led to a trial of journey planning programmes for jobseekers.

Making a difference for the long-term unemployed relied on innovation, creativity and teamwork. We have made great strides in a short period of time and respectfully invite you to learn more about our work.

### 2.2 Leadership, Vision and Strategy.

*"We recognise that jobs, skills and sustainable-businesses drive the growth of the Lancashire economy. This is the focus of our corporate strategy 2005-09 through the theme "a place where people can work and prosper". The core purpose of our corporate strategy is to ensure we promote community cohesion, equality and diversity, and social inclusion.*

*We champion the work of the Lancashire Partnership, its vision for 2020 and its 13 key ambitions including Prosperous Lancashire and Accessible Lancashire.*

*The additionality of the Lancashire Local Area Agreement exemplifies how our roles as community leader, partner, employer, procurer and provider of services achieves remarkable outcomes to share with partners."* **Hazel Harding, Leader, Lancashire County Council**

We have a very clear and specific vision of what we want to achieve:

*"We work in partnership to attract new higher-value added businesses, support existing businesses, and create a culture of entrepreneurship. We believe that by addressing these priorities we will help people living in, and serving Lancashire to access the benefits of economic growth, and to work and prosper, now and in the future."* County Councillor Niki Penney, Chair - Lancashire County Developments Limited; *Lancashire County Council Economic Development Delivery Framework 2006*

Our approach is underpinned by research undertaken by the county council with partners to identify and prioritise the key barriers, problems and challenges to achieving sustainable economic growth in Lancashire:

1. Our Corporate Intelligence team were commissioned to provide the "State of Lancashire" report for our sustainable communities strategy 'Ambition Lancashire'. It drew on "Life in Lancashire" primary research with service users and communities and led to the creation of our vision. It is that **"by 2025 a Prosperous Lancashire will be characterised by its innovative and dynamic businesses, social-enterprise, training-opportunities and skilled workforce with major new developments in key locations creating the conditions for growth across the county."** ('Ambition Lancashire')
2. We are founding partners of the Lancashire Economic Partnership and contribute to research to underpin the development of the Lancashire Economic Strategy 2006-09, and central Lancashire city-region development plan 2006. We helped shape the sub-regional investment framework and delivery plans that followed.
3. Lancashire Local Area Agreement (LAA) was developed using primary research from these sources, refined this knowledge and with other research from thirty partners drew on:
  - a. 12 district sustainable community strategies;
  - b. 5 business led vision-boards;
  - c. 2 multi-area-agreements for Fylde and Pennine Lancashire;
  - d. Central Lancashire Local Development Framework partnership establishing priorities, especially high-quality workspace for business and informing public sector capital expenditure plans;
  - e. Sector specific research provided by Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board, Creative Lancashire, rural enterprise, and environmental initiatives and programmes.
  - f. Lancashire Local Transport Plan;
  - g. 10 market-towns initiatives;
  - h. Parish-plans;
  - i. Hundreds of regeneration projects in deprived-areas, including four Neighbourhood Renewal areas;
  - j. Partnership working with voluntary, faith and community sector;
  - k. Regional and national research provided through other multi-agency partners, including Jobcentre Plus and the Learning and Skills Council.

As a result of this research, partners agree the key problems for Lancashire are a low-wage, low-skills economy, and the barriers presented in increasing higher added value business sectors, skills and employability. Integral to this is the need to consider issues for particular groups of people across the county, people with disabilities and from black and minority ethnic communities not always represented sufficiently across workforces, particularly at management level.

Partners also recognise that economic growth has been positive, generally within five to ten miles of the north-south motorway spinal routes. However, some communities are not benefiting from this growth. These communities are further away from this axis and have experienced low or negative economic growth, resulting in partnerships responding with differentiated approaches to economic development in Lancashire.

This analysis underpins the Regional and Lancashire economic strategies, Lancashire city region action plan, Ambition Lancashire and LAA, and partners shared priorities of:

1. Increasing GVA in Lancashire by closing the productivity gap between the north and south of the UK.
2. Reducing worklessness in Lancashire, targeting particular groups of residents, and deal with employer's labour shortages, by improving employability.
3. Up-skilling the workforce to meet Leitch targets at level 2 and 4 NVQ, across Lancashire.

These priorities have been widely adopted in neighbourhood, parish, town, district, multi-district and countywide partnerships to shape relevant local economic delivery plans.

Lancashire LAA "Economy" Thematic Group also adopted these themes. It recognises that economy has cross-cutting impact across all other themes, including promoting equality and diversity, social inclusion, and building cohesive and resilient communities. The Vulnerable Families Project is an example.

Our LAA 2008-11 forms the latest achievable and resourced implementation plan with effective programmes and innovative projects designed to achieve better outcomes for all communities in Lancashire. It addresses the three

shared priorities identified above, and reflects twin ambitions of achieving sustainable business growth and enabling people to access the benefits of economic prosperity exemplified through:

- Specific initiatives under our Climate Change Programme to assist businesses address the economic impacts of climate change through improved resource and energy efficiency. These interventions, together with actions to reduce our carbon emissions, demonstrate we are committed to achieving the target of reducing CO2 emissions by at least 30% by 2020 and achieving the vision of "a low carbon well adapted Lancashire"
- The promotion of community cohesion, equality and diversity, and social inclusion reflects the importance we place on our core purpose to ensure that Lancashire is a place where everyone matters, enjoys equal and quality life chances, and is valued and respected in their communities.
- The fundamental additionality of our approach is in identifying and overcoming of institutional barriers, in particular established public sector recruitment practices. **We have changed existing custom and practice by adopting WorkStart, using our mainstream resources, services and capacities to develop sustainable and innovative approaches, which are delivering results, are replicable and of interest to a national audience across the public-sector.**

In summary, we consistently raise economic prosperity through partnership in three ways:

1. Our community leadership role and core purpose, working with partners to undertake research, develop and agree strategies, and agree roles in delivering outcomes.
2. Our responsibilities in leading and facilitating partnership, for example, working to develop and deliver LAA outcomes.
3. Our role as service deliverer, employer and procurer of services, and through Lancashire County Developments Ltd., our £53m urban-rural economic-development company based in the Office of the Chief Executive. As a social enterprise LCDL reinvests £6m surplus annually in economic development services from its property and loan portfolios.

This approach is embedded within our Corporate Plan 2006-09, and is explicit within our annual delivery plan and directorate business plans 2008-09. Through Team Lancashire we are leading a joined-up local authorities response to the Sub-National Review for the Lancashire sub-region.

From a standing start, the economic thematic group for our LAA has taken enormous strides to enhance joint working in its first two years, already achieving the first stretch target on worklessness.

Its innovative approach recognises the significant potential economic impact of £4bn annual public sector spend and contribution to Lancashire's £17.3bn GVA economy. It is:

- Overseeing a 231% increase in the number of public sector apprentices.
- Developing innovative low cost, high impact WorkStart programme and enabling 483 workless people to secure sustainable employment.
- Facilitating better collaboration the creation of 1367 new businesses consistent with business support simplification.

## 2.3 Community and Customer Engagement and Empowerment.

Community and customer engagement is a key driver for our corporate strategy 2005-09, economic development framework 2006 and engagement with businesses and people in local communities through our;

1. Community leadership role, working with partners to deliver better service outputs and wider outcomes.
2. Responsibilities in leading and facilitating the delivery of Lancashire Local Area Agreement (LAA) outcomes in the Lancashire Partnership.
3. Role as service-deliverer, employer and procurer of services.

Additionally, our **customer access** strategy puts customers first and describes in detail how to deal with face-to-face, telephone and self-service customers. This approach takes into account the needs of different equality groups, including people with disabilities, black minority ethnic communities, and lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender communities. It acknowledges that some groups of people prefer different ways of accessing services. For example people with learning-disabilities and people who do not have English as a first-language prefer to speak

face-to-face rather than use the telephone or internet.

Through this three tiered approach we work with business, communities and partners like Jobcentre Plus and the Lancashire Learning and Skills Council to improve employment and skills services and communicate employment, skills and enterprise opportunities. This enables us to deliver services which put the customer at the forefront of delivery. Examples follow in this section and in "outcomes".

We **engage with business** through five business led vision boards in Lancashire, chairing the north west development agency's enterprise-stakeholder forum, representing their views on the regional private sector led enterprise forum, and contributing to the development of local development frameworks contributing to future sustainable business growth.

Our approach to **community engagement** in two-tier areas supports people from all backgrounds to influence service delivery. For example we have extended across the whole county Lancashire Local meetings, where elected-members from county and district councils listen and respond to issues raised by local communities.

These joint-committees have a range of devolved decision making responsibilities and significant devolved budgets. Local people take this opportunity to engage with elected members in their own communities and to shape/influence county council and partner services

Underpinning this we have locality focus frameworks across twelve districts, supported by a network of district partnership officers in each locality and elected members. Key milestones to further develop this role are included in our annual delivery plan and directorate business plans. Community groups representing the interests of people across six equality strands further support this. For example we worked with a number of the groups to develop our equality and diversity e-learning programme.

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) enhances these engagement practices, which provide some of the glue connecting many inter-related strands. For example the People & Communities theme ensures that equality and diversity and input from the voluntary, faith and community sector is embedded throughout LAA delivery. Theme Leads meetings and workshops create shared understanding between health, children and young people, housing, older-people, environment, community-safety, and economic development and enterprise and lead to shared projects delivering cross-cutting outcomes, for example Vulnerable Families.

In the last two years, our enterprise thematic partnership has delivered outputs and outcomes that have changed people's lives for the better. Together we have learned how best to tackle worklessness, improve skill levels, and promoting enterprise through and to communities and businesses, for example:-

§ A successful Neighbourhood Renewal Funded pilot in Pendle was extended across Lancashire resulting in 14000 mailings being sent to long-term incapacity and lone parent benefit claimants. 2200 people responded leading to 483 people being recruited into sustainable employment and the achievement of our stretch target.

§ This best practice included organising 30 jobs-fairs in all Districts, bringing together employers with vacancies and long-term jobseekers. On occasions these were led by single employers, such as Next and Booths, and on other occasions had a number of employers. Vision, the county council's free community-newspaper, circulated every six-weeks to every home in Lancashire, has been used to advertise these events.

§ Five events targeted at the black and minority ethnic community. Other public-sector partners were invited to them, including the police whose attendance at the Accrington session successfully increased the number of applications they received for residents to become community-support-officers.

§ Following feedback from customers attending events, partners recognised that additional routes needed to be developed to enable recruitment of workless people to the public sector. Building on private sector good practice Jobcentre Plus and the County Council led by developing "WorkStart" on behalf of other public sector employers, and have proactively shared this good practice with Districts, NHS and Police HR Managers.

§ Through a series of workshops with Jobcentre Plus, Lancashire Learning and Skills Council, district councils and training-providers we have further developed a business (demand) led approach to worklessness. Research showed that there are many communities in Lancashire with employment sites within a mile of deprived areas with less than 1% of people in those areas working on these sites. We proposing targeting businesses on these sites to sign up to local employer partnerships, jobs and skills pledges, and to encourage more local people to fill their vacancies; pilots are agreed for Burnley, Preston and Wyre.

§ Work-step, part of adult & community directorate, works directly with employers to help people with learning difficulties and disabilities into employment.

§ Feedback from those seeking work suggested that a lack of knowledge of public transport was a barrier to

some people taking-up employment opportunities. Further work identified that advisers in Jobcentres were not always familiar with public transport in the area where they worked and the Travel-Line journey planner programme. It led to a trial the use of this programme in job-centres, and was mentioned on the counties accessible transport beacon award 2007.

§ We developed and managed Grants for Growth to increase voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) capacity to engage with employers and help long-term unemployed people move towards employment. 237 VCFS projects were supported, including 22 job-clubs, which included clubs for unemployed black and minority ethnic women, black and minority ethnic people, young-people and older-people. We were recently awarded the LSC contract to deliver community grants, directly addressing LAA targets.

§ To increase apprenticeship recruitment in the public sector we developed a marketing campaign with partners promoting apprenticeships and job roles through leaflet, poster and communications campaign in schools, communities and the voluntary and community sector.

§ Our approach to enterprise support is based on the "Sirolli" experience in Rossendale. It predicates increasing start-up by stimulating greater interest in enterprise in the working age population. Each district in Lancashire has adopted its own targets within the LAA, meeting performance targets in our first two years.

§ Through our Rosebud enterprise investment service, business tenants, and members of our sector based partnerships (Creative Lancashire and the Lancashire & Blackpool Tourist Board) we have a first hand working understanding of business needs and business priorities in Lancashire. It also ensures that our responses are appropriate and relevant, for example our innovative consultation with businesses affected by housing clearance in Hyndburn.

## 2.4 Actions.

Partners are signed up to a robust performance management framework. It gives rigour, discipline and drive to the partnership's effectiveness and resulting outcomes. It has supported the effective working of the economy theme group over the last two years.

### **Performance management and risks**

Partners have embedded a strong culture of performance management in the LAA. It provides rigour to our activities to achieving a Prosperous Lancashire and PERFORM, provides e-governance support to lead and named measure owners and partnership delivery plans.

PERFORM also supports our community-leader role by enabling attention to be focussed where it is most required. The red, amber, green alert method is used to drill down from the overall outcome to the smallest appropriate spatial level at which an output is reportable. This transparency enables the partnership and partners to evaluate the effectiveness of their actions, on outcomes such as narrowing the gap.

PERFORM supports our role as facilitator and partner by providing partners with live access to quarterly performance reports. A "ladder of support and intervention" identifies the numerous reporting-flows and stages at which intervention and support could be offered to targets by partners or the wider partnership. The discipline of this approach to performance has already led to examples of performance recovering and improvement.

PERFORM supports our delivery role by holding lead partners to account. Target leads are licensed to provide and input data for PERFORM. The LSC provides data for level 2 skills and we provide data for new businesses established.

Innovation is encouraged in the LAA economy thematic group. Wyre Borough Council has shared its 'lead professional' approach to business support, whilst South Ribble and Chorley Borough Councils have each introduced an employment charter to increase employer engagement in their localities.

**Risks and opportunities** in relation to delivery are monitored and managed, from strategic county wide risks, to risks which are unique to particular areas of the county. Risks and opportunities are assessed and recorded in the LAA risk register so that they can be reviewed alongside progress against objectives. Mitigating actions and risk owners are allocated focussing on 'red' measures and stretch targets to support performance-management. The broad spectrum of partners across the LAA has enabled these risks to be managed through discussion, shared learning and joint working.

### **Mapping of communities**

Lancashire is an extremely diverse county, with some of the most affluent wards in the region and country as well as many of the most deprived wards. Effective mapping of communities has led to partners adopting appropriate and relevant localised delivery strategies. Pockets of disadvantage identified through the LAA county wide thematic group and local structures such as economic theme groups of local strategic partnerships and district vision-boards, and Lancashire Locals inform development and delivery plans. They are an innovative coming together of district and county councillors in each of Lancashire's 12 districts to give greater local empowerment, also provide a platform for specific challenges to be met.

Once challenges and opportunities are identified, action is taken to tackle the issues, for example.

- As community leaders we have championed specific physical economic development as part of a collaborative arrangement with Rossendale Borough Council. Studies identifying and mapping economic trends have been undertaken, such as employment-land and retail-studies alongside Rossendale and Ribble Valley partners.
- As founding partners in Great Goals Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) programme in east Lancashire we worked with other local authorities to bid for £23 million over three years. The bid was grounded on a rich evidence base charting levels of disadvantage across the area such as below average business start up rates, above average worklessness figures, and extremely low expectations in many communities. The bid is based around the area's three football league clubs and projects have been based in and around them. For example Burnley's enterprise-hub has been established in Burnley's Turf Moor football stadium.

Also, in March 2008, in developing our new LAA we held an impact assessment event which to map equality issues. Some of the outcomes were:

- Age profile: provide more support to older people starting a business and wanting jobs. This links to consultation on the Older Person's Strategy and will be developed as part of the LAA delivery-plan.
  - Disability: provide support for people with a disability access employment, supporting our Work Step service.
  - Gender: encourage employers to recruit more women to higher management positions and raise aspiration of women to apply for those positions.
  - Race: provide mentoring opportunities for BME young people and women returning to work. We have a corporate equality and diversity objective to ensure a representative workforce at all levels of the organisation.
  - Sexual orientation: undertake jobs-fairs and provide training for employers and schools on issues for LGBT people.
- In our role as service deliverer we commissioned an action research study to investigate the potential for developing social enterprises to deliver sustainable extended services in schools in selected pilot areas. Our aim was to firmly reinforce extended services and embed schools as hubs of the community so that services are delivered on the basis of evidenced need. Work is now starting in pilot areas to develop new and integrated partnerships supporting the regeneration of local economies and communities, and our core purpose.

## Effective projects

We have delivered effective projects in an environmentally sustainable way which facilitate innovative joined-up service delivery and avoid duplication:

- As community leader we have purchased land at Rising Bridge with a view to developing office accommodation to stimulate market demand. This follows up the employment land study in Rossendale (referred to above). The project will provide up to 10% reusable energy agreement on site and will follow the regional development agency's sustainable building policy.
- As a partner we have worked alongside the regional development agency's ENWORKS programme and led the delivery of a targeted social enterprise resource efficiency programme in Lancashire. This innovative project joined up 82 social enterprises across the county and helped them realise significant energy, waste and CO2 savings through the provision of specialist advice and grant funding.
- As service deliverer, we employed the county's first third sector procurement officer enabling third sector commissioning strategies with several groups, including our adult and community services directorate. These innovative strategies aim to help third sector organisations work with the local public-sector more proactively, consider added-value such as community knowledge and economic impact when evaluating a tender, and better understand public sector procurement and commissioning processes. To support this we have worked with the Social Enterprise for Lancashire Network (SELNET) to develop TRAK (Tender Readiness Audit Kit). TRAK's purpose is to help third sector organisations contract with

the public sector. It does this by guiding them through the general prequalification questionnaire to reach the stage of being invited to tender for a contract. It also provides a general overview of public-sector procurement, its rules and regulations.

*"I think TRAK is a very useful aid to social-enterprises wishing to trade with the public-sector. It sets out the key messages clearly and its availability should encourage the 3rd sector to bid for public-sector contracts with a confidence that has been perhaps lacking in the past".* James Douglas, Assistant Head of Office Support Services, Chorley Borough Council.

## 2.5 Partnerships.

We have a passion for effective partnership working despite its challenges and complexity, working across a number of geographical footprints, political authorities as well as organisational boundaries.

*"With 34,565 VAT-registered businesses, a population of 1.16 million and a £17.3 billion GVA economy we recognise that raising economic prosperity across all the communities of Lancashire can only be achieved in partnership."* Hazel Harding, Leader, Lancashire County Council, Chair of the Lancashire Partnership and Lancashire Economic Partnership Forum.

Lancashire is a two-tier local authority area with a county council and 12 district-councils. Together, local-authorities and partners serve a population of 1.16 million giving us the power and potential to achieve significant outcomes for people and communities. We have

- 1 county-council;
- 12 district-councils;
- 2 unitary-councils;
- 15 Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) with sustainable community strategies;
- 5 primary care trusts;
- pan-Lancashire police and fire services;
- regionally based organisations such as the Environment Agency;
- a voluntary, community and faith sector of over 3000 organisations;
- 3 regional bodies: GONW, NWRA, NWDA;
- Lancashire Economic Partnership;
- Lancashire Learning and Skills Council, Jobcentre Plus, Business Link North-West.

In recognition of the broader Lancashire footprint and the shared cross-boundary issues the development of multi-area-agreements is being pursued with Blackpool Council for the Fylde Coast and Blackburn with Darwen in Pennine Lancashire.

"Ambition Lancashire", our sustainable community strategy, adopted by the Lancashire Partnership in 2005, sets the context for the actions that will be developed to achieve our vision and that will be reflected in the targets and indicators we agreed for our Local Area Agreement (LAA).

Governance of the Lancashire Partnership is undertaken through a partnership board and its executive. Performance of the LAA is managed through the Lancashire Partnership Performance Group, through seven theme partnerships, district Local Strategic Partnerships, and lead partners-and target-leads.

All partners were involved in agreeing priorities and targets. During November/December 2007 consultation events were held across the county with LSPs and strategic partners. Each partner was asked to consider likely LAA indicators in relation to local issues, partner priorities and emerging community issues. Government Office North-West shared their issues to partners. A number of consultations were held to ensure the LAA does not disadvantage any particular community, resulting in the Impact Assessment outlined in "Actions". Thematic partnerships, including the economy, reviewed the results and considered potential targets against a common set of principles:

- Delivery of community strategy priorities;
- Added-value to other Lancashire plans and strategies;
- Consultation responses;
- Survey data;
- Profile and performance data;
- Who benefits, how and where;
- Cross-cutting impact.

The three priorities identified for economy were increasing productivity and skills and reducing worklessness.

Two principles viewed as fundamental to the achievement of all ambitions were agreed, to "narrow the gap" and to have "active and engaged communities and citizens". Where possible, suites of indicators were amassed around key themes. For example, social exclusion of offenders has an explicit link to the action-planning for tackling worklessness in deprived communities.

*"Working in partnership for a Prosperous Lancashire gives us the opportunity to achieve greater economic impact from the £4-billion annual public expenditure in the County to for example, reduce Worklessness. The County Council's 'WorkStart' programme is an excellent illustration of our approach!"* Ged Fitzgerald, Chief Executive, Lancashire County Council

Our economic-development framework 2006 includes a guiding principle of "achieving results by working with partners." Examples include:

**Creative Lancashire**, a business-led, public/private sector partnership for creative-industries. Its mission is to realise the combination of creative and commercial potential of this sector in the county to develop Lancashire's fastest growing sector to

- develop new markets;
- innovate with new and existing products and services;
- support financial and human-resource management;
- enable e-commerce.

A business-led board governs the partnership, chaired by a local social-entrepreneur, with support services provided through our economic development company (LCDL).

**Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board** is a business led, membership, sector partnership for tourism, governed by a board of directors. Services are provided to its 250 members on

- marketing and promotions;
- business development;
- skills and training;
- investing in quality;
- research

A board of directors govern the partnership through a company limited by guarantee, LCDL services support its work.

**Lancashire's Black Minority Ethnic Pact** formed to enable voluntary groups to come together to share best practice and to provide a voice for local BME communities is supported by the county council. Its board initiates policy, provides structured support, coordinates delivery, and help partner organisations meet the needs of the BME sector. The Pact's overall aim is to ensure that local communities and businesses contribute to, and benefit from, regeneration and community cohesion by enabling them to engage, inform and participate in the changes that are taking place locally and regionally.

Through the **Lancashire rural partnership**, we have actively supported the rural economy as demonstrated in our successful Beacon award (2005). The Rural Business Facilitation Service Steering Group - consisting public and private sector representatives, including Defra, Government Office North-West, and National Farmers Union, provided a steer to delivery of the rural action plan. The project provided mostly capital support for development of workspace, governance support came from the county council. We are also a member of the Lancashire Rural Practitioners Steering Group, which seeks to co-ordinate rural regeneration efforts across the county through Local Authority officers, regional development agency, Natural England, Myerscough College and Forestry Commission.

**East Lancashire's Local Enterprise Growth Initiative** (LEGI) partnership, consisting ourselves, Burnley, Pendle, Hyndburn and Blackburn with Darwen councils, see the partnerships section. Governance is managed by PLLACE consisting of local authority partners.

**The Lancashire Technology Centre** is owned by Burnley Borough Council, Burnley College, and the county council (LCDL). Lancashire Technology Centre Limited (LTCL) is a joint venture company formed in 2005 to develop a business centre focussed on opportunities in advanced manufacturing, business incubation and skills

development. The exemplar partnership of the joint venture and £375,000 investment (£300,000 capital interest free loan and £75,000 revenue) by LCDL has successfully attracted £3 million in infrastructure investment and created 30,000 square feet of business incubation space on the redundant Michelin site in Burnley.

**Skelmersdale Partnership** was established to manage Skelmersdale's Single Regeneration Budget aimed at narrowing the economic, social and environmental inequalities of the town. The county council was accountable body and facilitated the partnership's governance through a community led partnership board. Our stewardship, development and delivery of effective projects led to it being commended in the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Award for Sustainable Communities 2004.

We have supported other **community-led regeneration partnerships**. For example, two redundant county primary schools in Hyndburn (Scaitcliffe and Springhill) were adopted by community groups as community resource centres and social enterprises.

**Market-town partnerships** have been supported by the council with local partners determining the determination of priorities. For example with Carnforth Area Regeneration Partnership we are allocating grants by managing their Business Support Fund, working alongside members of the partnership's executive. West Craven's market-town partnership enabled the Rainhall Primary School re-open as an enterprise and resource centre. Our involvement came through the work of Property Group in negotiating the lease, and LCDL who supported the regeneration of the building with partners.

## 2.7 Outcomes.

### Increased prosperity

- As community leader we work with our partners to achieve our shared vision for "Prosperous Lancashire", resourcing action plans through for example the new £520 million north-west European Structural Funds programme 2007-13. We are accountable-body for a 7 year £30 million business support programme part-funded by European Structural Funds.
- As partner we have facilitated through the Local Area Agreement (LAA) activity supporting the creation of 1367 businesses since April 2006.
- As service deliverer we have:
  - invested over £70m directly into economic development since 2002;
  - generated an increase of over £18m in GVA through our own direct investment in Lancashire business through Rosebud and other services;
  - created or safeguarded 1800 jobs in the last 6-years;
  - created or improved over 230,000ft<sup>2</sup> of business space since 2006;
  - supported the development of a countywide network of credit unions;
  - secured £20-million annually through our welfare rights service in benefit awards, many of whom live in deprived communities; research suggests this additional finance supports 500-jobs in the local economy annually.

*"In today's uncaring society you are a credit to Lancashire County Council and have enabled me to have a better quality of life"*  
. Welfare Rights customer, Burnley

### Reduced worklessness

- As community leader and with partners, including Jobcentre Plus, we made worklessness a top priority, adopting a progression model which delivered better joined up, targeted, cost efficient and sustainable programme of intervention directly helping 483 long term claimants into sustainable employment.
- As service deliverer we have:
  - Pioneered Work-Start, a work-trial for public sector organisations, and committed to organising 90 placements for 2008/09. To date 21 placements have enrolled and 10 have moved into employment as a direct result of the initiative.

- Through Grants for Growth we have supported 237 voluntary and community-based projects help out-of-work people move towards employment.

### **Increased skills levels**

- As community-leader we have recognised the connection between growth-sectors of Lancashire's economy and skills needs. For example our tourism undergraduates project was commended by the National Council for Work Experience in 2007. It placed tourism degree students in tourism businesses at the county's larger tourist destinations for three-months and in smaller organisations for nine.
- As partner we committed to increasing public sector apprenticeships in the public-sector. As an employer we have set a leading example, are signing the LSC Skills Pledge, having 136 apprentices on placement, with a cumulative target of 250 in the business plan. In 2006, this figure was 6.
- As service deliverer we have supported 120 at risk young people through apprenticeships in small Lancashire businesses, with sole traders. The completion rate for the young-people has been over 95%. Additionally, most businesses expanded and developed significantly.

### **Raised levels of enterprise**

- As community-leader we listened to customers and partners responses which meet sector gaps in the Lancashire economy. Three new Rosebud products have been introduced to service their needs Environment Rosebud, Digital Rosebud with Creative Lancashire and Tourism Rosebud with Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board.
- As service deliverer we have:
  - Employed the county's first local authority third-sector procurement officer. The officer visits agencies across the county promoting the third-sector including giving advice on public-sector procurement rules and regulations, marketing, tender opportunities and responses, and policies.

*"I am in the process of setting up my own social-enterprise, and have worked closely in a business-support capacity with other social-enterprise organisations in the Lancashire-region, many of whom have met with your procurement-officer. The value of the information provided by their knowledge is considerable, as they show an active knowledge in each company, identifying a range of procurement opportunities. They also add value through signposting to other social enterprises and key personnel who can add value to each organisation."* Richard Harrison, Callisto Innovation

- Supported the former Rainhall Primary School in Pendle to reopen as an enterprise and resource centre. Our involvement came in negotiating the lease, and supporting the regeneration of the building along with partner funders.
- Provided simplified effective support for local businesses and social enterprises in a way that is consistent with the business support simplification process and with sectoral and economic demand.

### **Narrowed prosperity inequalities and a better infrastructure to support this.**

- As community-leader we champion diversity in Lancashire and have tackled issues at their relevant spatial level whether this be county, district or neighbourhood. For example, we prioritised east-Lancashire as an area where substantial investment was required to raise the standard of living and aspiration in many communities which rank highly in deprivation indices. Recognising the importance of education, health and enterprise, £422-million pounds is being invested through Building Schools for the Future (BSF), Housing Market Renewal (HMR), and Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) funding to raise attainment, improve health and stimulate greater aspirations.
- As partner in these schemes we have sought to maximise investment. The County Council is not a strategic housing authority and consequently our primary role is in part to focus on tackling the socio-economic issues which surround the housing issues in the area. We have approached this task through the development of locality-teams and "added-value plans", designed to complement the activity and investment of our partners in terms of HMR.
- As service-deliverer we:
  - Undertook an equality and diversity impact assessment of our Grants for Growth programme to inform future work;
  - Have reassigned redundant buildings to community-use as part of local economic-regeneration programmes
  - Were a key-partner in transforming the St Augustine's Church site in Avenham (Preston) into a multi-use social-enterprise with community-space, including gym, sports-centre, enterprise-space, crèche, and

training and conference facilities. To ensure the venture was managed in an economically sustainable way and accessible to local people, we employed the centre manager for the first two years.

- And accountable body for Skelmersdale Partnership. Through effective mapping, development and delivery the partnership excelled and was commended in the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Award for Sustainable Communities 2004.

### **High levels of business satisfaction that they can fill vacancies with skilled and motivated local people**

- As community-leader and employer we recognise that we can still do more we are proud that Lancashire's employment rate is at a historical high, and levels of attainment are rising.
- As a partner we work to enable business' employment demands are met.

*"I recently advertised a job vacancy at the local Jobcentre and was impressed with the fact it was a free service, efficient service from the Jobcentre staff, and the suitability of the prospective candidates for the job. I would recommend using this service."* Martin Cleaver, Foulridge Canal Cruises. (from Tourism Forum minutes, Pendle, May'08)

- As one of the county's biggest employers we are proactive in giving every person a chance of employment with the council:

*"We have an aging workforce and need to replenish with well-trained, motivated and skilled people if we are to meet the customer driven demands of the future. In partnership we have developed processes, such as WorkStart, which support people from every community in Lancashire to come and work with us."* Cllr Tom Burns - Cabinet Member for Organisational Development

### 3 **Outline, with reference to a specific case (a geographical area, a particular section of the community, an individual or particular issue) how you have taken action to address an issue and the impact that this action has had.**

As community-leader we have led the way to improve the economic prosperity of economically disadvantaged people across Lancashire.

We have used our role as partner and facilitator of our LAA to drive cost-efficient and innovative actions resulting in 483 long term claimants return to work.

*"Its our job to recruit people who can provide excellent services, AND to address worklessness. Through WorkStart, we do both and open a new pathway for workless people to an additional 25% vacancies in Lancashire and perhaps the UK."* Director of Human Resources, Carol Mills at LGIU Worklessness Conference 26 May 2008.

#### **As community-leader**

In 2006 in Lancashire 106,540 people were claiming an 'out-of-work' benefit. Of these 72,890 claimed an incapacity or lone-parent benefit. At this time county-wide activity to tackle worklessness was delivered in isolation by Jobcentre Plus. Additional support from partners varied from area to area, was unstructured and sporadic, and was usually instigated through additional funding for deprived communities such as Neighbourhood Renewal Fund areas.

A priority of Lancashire's community strategy, reducing worklessness was targeted in Lancashire's Local Area Agreement (LAA) as something where impact was needed and meaningful improvements could be made.

Through partnership, the county council and Jobcentre Plus have led a process, with other partners, to identify how best to join-up employability services. Jobcentre Plus agreed they primarily targeted new and recent claimants. Those claiming incapacity or lone-parent benefit for over six-months were largely ignored.

#### **As partner & facilitator in LAA**

Using the LAA framework a stretching target of supporting 480-people, claiming an incapacity or lone-parent benefit for more than six-months, into work, was agreed. This represented an additional 1%-reduction of 'long-term' claimant stock. At its core was an action-plan committed to achieving delivery of the target in a way which developed sustainable ways of tackling worklessness for the betterment of all people claiming benefits in Lancashire.

The action-plan had four themes:

- engaging with more claimants;
- joining-up existing statutory, private and voluntary services;
- working with employers to offer claimants real opportunities;
- supporting claimants who had recently become employed.

In so-doing we have developed two flagship schemes, both of which are innovative, unique, and have national significance as vehicles for local government tackling worklessness.

#### **1. Adding-value to Jobcentre Plus**

Jobcentre Plus is the only partner with access to all benefit claimants. Using the action-plan, partners prepared a marketing-strategy which committed to personally contacting the entire target customer-group during the three-years of the LAA. This involved:

- recognising seasonal fluctuations and behaviour patterns amongst the target-group. For example, a lone-parent mailing was sent in September to coincide with the new school term;
- extending existing approaches to cover areas of the county which had no employability delivery amongst public organisations other than Jobcentre Plus. For example, South Ribble held its first jobs-fair and linked it with a networking event for training providers;
- using surveys to determine and try to meet the needs and desires of the target group. For example

matching skills needs to training and personal-development courses run by the council's Adult Learning;

- hosting a range of job and opportunities fairs, led by different partners, including private-sector employers and the ourselves. For example we led five events promoting public-sector working to black and minority ethnic communities, encouraging applications from attendees.

This approach has already achieved the challenging LAA stretch-target nine-months ahead of profile, with almost 500-Lancashire residents from the most deprived communities having secured work.

- Nicola claimed incapacity-benefit for 9-years before securing work in Haslingden;
- Shayeda claimed lone-parent benefit for 6-years before working in Preston for the Immigration Advisory service.

Analysis of performance shows that we have tended to support people who have claimed benefits for between 6 and 24-months. Government papers state that the average length of stay on incapacity-benefit is eight-years. With average incapacity-benefit entitlement being £7,750, a typical eight-year claim would total £62,000. Given our current performance we can therefore claim a county-wide saving of £22.3 million, £46,500 per person. Having reviewed the cost of this intervention, each job-entry costs approximately only £28.

### **As service deliverer, procurer & employer**

One-in-five jobs in Lancashire are in the public-sector. Again using the LAA framework public-sector partners committed to look at their workforce-development and how as employers they could contribute to the employability of residents they serve.

## **2. Work-Start: a public-sector work-trial**

Leading the way the county council, in partnership with Jobcentre Plus, has developed Work-Start, the first public-sector work-trial.

Work-Start began in January 2008. To date 71 people have been referred to the county council, all of whom have been offered support, including interview skills from the council's Adult-Learning. 21 have begun a work-placement. 10-people are already employed as a result of going through the Work-Start programme, including Lorraine, a lone-parent from Preston, who had not worked for seventeen-years before entering Work-Start. She was successful in a subsequent application for a reception position.

*"I really appreciate the experience and training I received on placement and feel so much more confident being back at work."*

Managers within the council are becoming more aware of Work-Start and are keen to use it to recruit.

*"As the Jobcentre client has to apply for the placement, the manager knows they are interested in working rather than being told they must attend."* Senior Librarian

We are currently leading the extension of Work-Start across the public-sector in Lancashire, and have already begun work with the police, fire and rescue service, and primary-care trusts.

*"Getting employers to support people back into work is paramount and can only be achieved where real job opportunities are made available. Lancashire County Council has led the way in developing and delivering Work-Start, a highly-effective low-cost way of supporting long-term claimants return to work."* Ian Kent, Partnership Manager, Jobcentre Plus Cumbria and Lancashire

*"Its hard to get back into office-work without recent experience. You've to convince someone to give you an opportunity. Work-Start proved I could do the job."* Kirsty, Work-Start graduate

### 4.1 Factors that underpin your success.

#### As Community Leader:

- We understand the pivotal importance of economic development to Lancashire and all its neighbourhoods and communities.
- We challenge custom and practice where it leads to disadvantage and have a very well developed and effective approach to equality and diversity, social inclusion and community cohesion.
- Our locality agenda helps us establish local needs, priorities and responses.

#### As Partner:

- Passion for partnership in a complex environment.
- Agreement amongst key stakeholders as to the priorities for achieving greater economic prosperity in Lancashire, particularly through the LAA.
- Our partner's shared vision and willingness to work together to bring effective results and benefit to the communities intended.
- We have a strong track record of innovation, creativity and achieving impact.
- Robust and supportive performance management systems.

#### As Deliverer:

- Our core purpose of "everyone matters" addressing equality and diversity, community cohesion and social inclusion.
- We have clear leadership and direction from councillors through an economic framework.
- We recognise our economic impact as provider, procurer and employer. .
- Our understanding
- Innovative staff devising creative and bespoke solutions to understood issues.

We are recognised as a successful authority and have been awarded:

- Four stars and "improving well" by the Audit Commission.
- Beacon status in five areas, including Supporting the Rural Economy.
- Commendation from Municipal Journal Awards 2007 ("Pay & Workforce") for approach to apprentices and "Work-Start".
- Commendation from National Workplace Council for our tourism undergraduate programme.

### 4.2 Successful initiatives.

- Local Area Agreements & effective multi-agency working
  - Achievement of demanding stretch target for worklessness;
  - Step-change in recruitment of public sector apprentices;
  - Continuous increase in business starts;
  - Innovative added-value solutions from existing mainstream provision;
  - Targeting additional resource, for example Local Enterprise Growth Initiative, to add-value to existing activity;
  - Multi-agency approach to problem-solving, particularly with vulnerable households and excluded communities.

- Integrating economic development as a core council priority.
  - Workforce Development Plan (Human Resources)
  - Transport & Accessibility (Environment Directorate)
  - Use of Buildings & Resources (Property Group)
  - Integrated economic development company (Lancashire County Developments Limited)
  - Procurement (Resources)
  - Economic development company, reinvesting £6m surplus annually in economic development services.
- Employability & Worklessness
  - A developed and integrated public-sector work trial, "Work-Start";
  - Improved working with Jobcentre Plus through progression model and more effective use of each others resource including achieving full potential from data held by Jobcentre Plus
  - A successful funding programme with voluntary and community groups, Grants For Growth, supporting return-to-work options through targeted local community groups;
- Business Support
  - Rosebud, a strong well-respected product of support for Lancashire business, diversifying its offer to meet current demand;
  - Creative Lancashire, a specific partnership supporting the development of creative industries in Lancashire;
  - Investing in physical sites to stimulate market demand and strategic need.
- Social Enterprise development
  - One of the first Third Sector Procurement officers in the country;
  - Tender Readiness Audit Toolkit produced to guide Lancashire's social enterprise in procurement activity;
  - Supporting social enterprise in Lancashire to be viable sustainable businesses.

### 4.3 Who are the key target audiences that would benefit from hearing your key messages?

Our approach to economic development is one grounded in evidence and community-led need delivered through partnership. Given the diversity and unique urban-rural mix of our county, the key target audience of local partners is very wide.

We think it important that economic development is seen in its broadest terms and that the audience is more than economic development professionals or those working for directly related organisations and agencies such as Jobcentre Plus or Business Link. Economic development is right across the local authority workplace and we would target all senior staff, project managers and members.

Our audiences are:

- Human Resources Professionals in all public sector employers (LAs, NHS, Police etc)
  - recruitment and retention issues
  - workforce strategies addressing aging workforce
  - issues about the high cost of temps
- Members and officers with economic development responsibilities and more specific interest in HMR, LEGI and BSF
- Jobcentre Plus staff and contractors implementing Flexible New Deal and looking to link Local Employer Partnerships with local recruitment of workless people

- Learning and Skills Council staff and providers looking to increase public involvement in apprenticeships as a contribution to achieving Leitch targets.
- Voluntary Faith and Community Sector organisations interested in contributing to the achievement of LAA targets
- DBRR and DCLG policy professionals with an interest in LEP jobs and skills pledges and Worklessness
- Social entrepreneurs keen to contribute to the adaptation and implementation of the progression model

#### **4.4 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?**

So far we have been successful in Beacon rounds:

- Four - Supporting the Rural Economy
- Five - Transforming the School Workforce
- Seven - Positive Youth Engagement in the Democratic Process
- Eight - Healthy Schools
- Nine - Improving Accessibility

We will revisit and develop the communication methods used following these successfully Beacon bids:

- Throughout 2009/10 we will develop e-learning and other web based material to explain and update our approach and the outcomes we achieve.
- Encourage partners and others using this approach to share their success stories and results
- Promote how we use our approach to economic development to address, equality and diversity, community cohesion and social inclusion
- Encouraging networking, action learning and support from other partners who may have overcome similar barriers
- Host events, and contribute to conferences and workshops through local, regional and national professional and sector bodies.
- Promote good practice further through IDeA, LGA, CEDOS, and LGIU
- Explore, through our European Office opportunities to share this best practice with other member states.
- Work with local universities to share knowledge and our experience.

We will work with our partners, including the private-sector, to consider innovative ways of information exchange which make the most of new technologies.

We will also work with other Beacon councils to exchange knowledge and experience through seminars, conference papers, newsletters, discussion forums and magazine articles. And we will continue to seek innovative ways of sharing and reaching our target audience as demonstrated by the examples above.

#### **4.5 What experience does your authority have with sharing lessons with others? Give examples of where your authority has supported others to improve.**

We are always looking for opportunities to share our lessons with other partners and have already:

- Worked with the Improvement & Development Agency to produce case-studies highlighting our approach to employability and worklessness through the Local Area Agreement (LAA), and how and why we have so dramatically increased the number of apprentices working for us;
- Presented our employability and worklessness approach, including "Work-Start" to the Local Government Information Unit seminar on Worklessness, April 2008. We have been reinvited to another such event in the autumn 2008;
- Inaugural members of LAA national action learning sets, including one for the economic development and enterprise theme.
- Sought award recognition for our work. We were recently commended in the Municipal Journal awards for 2007 under "Pay & Workforce" for our approach to employing apprentices and Work-Start.
- Presented our approach to economic development to European partners in Brussels.
- Shared our experience and knowledge with LAA and MAA partners in Lancashire at Lancashire Partnership Conferences to showcase how our approach has changed people's lives for the better, and

to encourage partners to work together in common purpose

We have shared the lessons from our previous five successful beacon applications and commit to continuing this practice

Our county councillors and officers regularly attend regional, national and international conferences, frequently presenting papers. We regularly act as host for conferences too.