

THE BEACON SCHEME 2008

Assessment Form

Theme	Positive engagement of older people to support and promote greater independence and wellbeing in later life
Authority	Lancashire County Council
Number	6148

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: Excellent - 5	Score: Excellent - 5	Score: Excellent plus - 5.5

Summary Comments		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
A well constructed application clearly addressing the key issues of this Theme. Engagement of older people is a feature from the development of the strategy through its review process to design of services and enhancement of what matters most to older people. The Council is not just evidencing the present but has plans for further development. It accepts that outcomes from some activity may be in their infancy but they are nonetheless valid and worthy. Evidence also confirms a clear understanding of the ageing society and the need to go well beyond traditional health and social care approaches. Overall the evidence presented confirms suitability for shortlisting under this Theme.	As organised, the visit provided a good opportunity for officials, Champion, partners and older people to inform us of strategic context, process, and to illustrate initiatives across the County. Effort, enthusiasm and pride was in abundance as was attendance at the event and willingness to share. Whilst this was very informative it did not always provide the opportunity to focus on and fully resolve the areas for investigation identified at the sift stage. As such the January presentation should include any remaining areas for investigation and link the abundance of activity to the key components of this theme-ie outcomes from engagement.	The presentation was well structured and clear with close attention given to the comments and AFIs following the visit. As such the opportunity was well grasped and any remaining doubts left at the visit stage allayed. The Council has made impressive progress and now a proven track record of placing older people at the heart of strategy and development. This has been achieved despite the size of the county and the need to take into account the needs of 12 Districts. They have also been involved in similar progress outside the county and influenced other organisations. It is therefore recommended that Lancashire County Council are awarded Beacon status for this Theme.

Score Summary Table			
	First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Leadership, Vision and Strategy	Very good - 4.5	Very good - 4.5	Excellent - 5
Community and Customer Engagement and Empowerment	Excellent - 5	Excellent - 5	Excellent plus - 5.5
Actions	Excellent - 5	Excellent - 5	Excellent plus - 5.5
Partnerships	Excellent - 5	Excellent plus - 5.5	Excellent plus - 5.5
Outcomes	Very good - 4.5	Very good - 4.5	Excellent plus - 5.5
Sharing Best Practise		Very good - 4.5	Excellent plus - 5.5

Leadership, Vision and Strategy (Section 2.2 of the application form)		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Score: Very good - 4.5	Score: Very good - 4.5	Score: Excellent - 5
Comments	Comments	Comments
<p>Evidence shows an older people's strategy has been developed with older people which then feeds into the 20 year community strategy-Ambition Lancashire. These are owned by all partners and have national requirements incorporated through the LAA and PSA 17.</p> <p>Evidence also illustrates a strategy going beyond health and social care to include active participation in later life. At a lower level the Older People's Working Group provides focus and analysis of strategy implementation and challenges potential age discrimination when appropriate.</p> <p>An Older People's Champion appointed by the Local Authority, ensures older people's issues are high on the agenda and has a small budget to facilitate events in the county. Districts have their own older people's champions.</p>	<p>The visit provided a good opportunity to meet the Older Peoples Champion and some senior officers responsible for leading change with older people. Their impact and leadership was confirmed.</p> <p>The overarching strategy sets out the 5 main aims developed with older people against which detailed plans and actions are developed.</p> <p>The presentation at the visit set out the fairly complex structure of governance and interdependence of the various organisations.</p>	<p>The excellent presentation from the CE emphasised the high level commitment to making changes both within the remit of the Council and by influencing others in the North West. The older peoples champions network without and within the council has gained a high reputation and has influenced partner approach at many levels. Partners and older people both involved in development of the latest LAA. The whole culture is one of ensuring older people are the focus of strategy and provision.</p>
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
<p>More information is needed on how leaders championing has influenced organisational culture and impacted provider behaviour. How has the lead and enthusiasm provided by Councillor Westell been translated into strong leadership elsewhere and, in turn, improved outcomes for older people ?</p>	<p>It would be helpful if the January presentation could demonstrate how this leadership has influenced others and changed attitudes towards older people within Lancashire CC.</p>	<p>None</p>

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: Excellent plus - 5.5
Comments	Comments	Comments
Evidence suggests a good history of engagement through the 12 District older people forums and the Links-focussing on health and social care. More widely, creation of 7 older people partnership boards has influenced the overarching policy to ensure inclusion of all older people's needs. Outside the formal engagement structure customer survey provides feedback on provision of adult learning, library services etc. Minority groups are particularly well served by the Councils approach to engagement. Specific Authority posts concentrate on involving the BME community, making contact with Asian women, and leading on specific changes. Social services surgeries have been located within the Asian community. Innovatively older people themselves have been engaged with the evaluation of tenders for adult social care, having their own decision making rights.	Discussion about the structure and interrelationship between the various representative groups clarified the high degree of engagement with older people as partners at all levels. This has included special attention to minority groups to encourage community cohesion and understand their specific needs.	The interrelated structure for formal engagement was clearly set out in the presentation ie development of the strategy, OP Partnership Boards, and the 12 District based OP forums. The AFI on the role of the forums was cleared by drawing out their broad remit which went well beyond health & social care. Furthermore, more evidence was provided on the engagement with and impact of minority groups eg the Muslim and Hindu community developing luncheon and breakfast clubs and committing themselves to the reminiscence project and health awareness.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
	Do the 12 Older People Forums at District level deal with issues other than health and social care? If so more information is required. More information is also required on how the engagement with minority groups has improved their independence and wellbeing.	None

Actions (Section 2.4 of the application form)		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Score: Excellent - 5	Score: Excellent - 5	Score: Excellent plus - 5.5

Comments	Comments	Comments
Strong evidence here depicting an annual review of the older peoples strategy with older people involved through the Partnership Boards and the Working Group. Communication of the outcomes are enhanced by the publication of an easy to read strategy handbook. Evidence also confirms comprehensive research -both quantitative by area and qualitative - both of which influenced the Face to Face Access Strategy. It is not clear why the resultant well being directory-a good initiative-is web based given that research shows only 3% of older people in the County prefer this method of communication. Older people have also influenced the content of social care communications.	In addressing the need to identify diverse needs of the community, the council has confirmed appropriate use of statistical data. The range of initiatives demonstrated at the visit was impressive as was the range of partner organisations. Some of these initiatives remain in their infancy eg intergenerational activity.	Linked with Engagement above, the presentation discussion confirmed the lengths to which the Council had gone to understand the minority groups needs and to develop ways of offering them opportunity. This has been refined to include older travellers, and older LGB & T people. Further statistical analysis has projected the longer term impact of ageing in all groups in the County.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
More evidence is needed to demonstrate how statistical data has influenced provision for those from BME communities. Given the existing structure for engagement with older people, the reason for and the role of the Older People Thematic Forum is unclear.	How has data on the minority groups influenced partner activity and outcomes for them? In addition what has been achieved by way of including older minority groups within their local community?	None

Partnerships (Section 2.5 of the application form)		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Score: Excellent - 5	Score: Excellent plus - 5.5	Score: Excellent plus - 5.5

Comments	Comments	Comments
Evidence here includes both traditional and more innovative partnership working. Traditional partners plus the private sector, fire service, faith groups and older people are included to various degrees. Those older people not involved directly are invited to become "virtual boards and groups" who on their own terms quality check communications. Sign up and ownership of the County's ageing strategy is through the Lancashire Partnership, agreement through the LAA and partly monitored through PSA indicators. Good examples where partners gaining additional funding have shared the resource to enhance wide ranging initiatives addressing outcomes for older people eg Action for Life, Golden Age (for the Muslim community) Green Gyms, and Grandparents Matter-addressing grandparents as sole carers.	The multiplicity of partner involvement in service improvement was confirmed by the visit. Our doubts about the permanency of working with older people as partners were allayed. Those older people we did meet were extremely enthusiastic and proud of achievements so far.	The discussion following the presentation continued to confirm the degree of progress made in bringing all partners on board and, critically, treating older people themselves as key players. The opportunity was also taken to explain the County's relationship with and influence on the Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service OP Strategy, the Police OP strategy and of course OP involvement in the LSP.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
It is noted that in the application summary reference to partnerships with Lancashire's older people does not have "permanent foundations". Why is this the case and what is being done to address it?	None	None

Outcomes (Section 2.7 of the application form)		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Score: Very good - 4.5	Score: Very good - 4.5	Score: Excellent plus - 5.5

Comments	Comments	Comments
The evidence clearly addresses the link between engagement and improved outcomes. Some outcomes are already achieved, others anticipated. The Council readily recognise the move away from outputs and have clear alignment between the national strategy and their own. Engagement through the Lancaster 50 Forward project has led to both employment of older people and improved care information and direction, as well as improved transport. Specific consideration has been given to the needs of older travellers and their low literacy skills. Working through Age Concern, engagement with the gay and lesbian communities has identified potential for improved outcomes specifically for them around social exclusion and financial well being. A clear structure exists for all levels of governance to monitor how engagement has produced improved outcomes.	The visit certainly "brought to life" a range of initiatives through partnership working and demonstrated a wealth of activity, involvement and better opportunities for older people. A clear structure also exists -including an outcome framework- to measure progress made. Less clear are the results from planned evaluation.	The presentation clearly addressed the AFI and anticipated questions on the relationship between engagement and outcomes. Clear examples were provided of engagement at all levels and with a cross section of older people who are now benefitting from improved independence and wellbeing.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
The evidence contains several examples of intended ways of monitoring, evaluating, and communicating the impact of engagement on improved outcomes for older people. It would be helpful if some of this could be updated to demonstrate actual progress.	The connection between engagement and improved outcomes is central to this theme. The January presentation should therefore include evidence showing that independence and well being has improved as a result of the engagement.	None

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
	<p>The application identified the following as the factors underpinning success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strong leadership and vision - strong older people's organisations - a voluntary sector ready to advocate on behalf of older people - a process that enables them to focus on local needs and priorities - successful partnerships - partners willing to engage with older people - a belief that diversity makes them stronger - willingness to back up vision with resources <p>This was confirmed at the visit.</p>	No further comments
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
	None	

Successful initiatives (Section 4.2 of the application form) (First Sift intentionally blank)		
First Sift	After visit	After presentation
Comments	Comments	Comments
	<p>There are many initiatives highlighted to support older people and which involve older people in their running. Not all of them require large amounts of money.</p>	<p>The area for investigation was answered in the presentation, particularly in the council's response to requests from the East Lancashire Older People's Partnership Board and Pendle Forum, the Chorley Older People's forum and the Preston Muslim forum elders. The outcomes demonstrate the success of these initiatives.</p>
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
	<p>To be discussed in the question time after the presentation.</p> <p>Which initiatives have been most successful in terms of engagement and improved outcomes?</p>	

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 key target audiences are wide-ranging and include elected members, central government, media, senior officers from local government and older people.	Lancashire was asked in terms of how the council would get elected members involved as champions. In Lancashire this was done through Community Leadership. Officers gave them the message and found that they could relate to the Older People agenda. The role of the Champion came first, followed by the Older People's Network which was a Cross Party group. This group reports directly to the cabinet. There is much to be shared here.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
	To be discussed in the question time after the presentation. How would you tailor your dissemination activities to meet the needs of the different audiences identified?	

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
	The application listed various activities. Of most interest were: - developing outcome frameworks - hosting beacon action learning sessions (ALS)	Time constraints prevented discussion of ALSs and 'shared reviews'.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
	To be discussed in the question time after the presentation. Could you say more about how would you organise ALS sessions? What does 'conduct shared reviews' meant in terms of working with other beacons.	

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
	Lancashire gave impressive examples of learning from and sharing with others, including Gloucestershire CC, Peterborough City Council and their districts. Lancashire seconded senior officers to CSCI's inspection's performance framework. Lancashire has also given national presentations.	Time constraints prevented discussion of the benefits of the secondment to CSCI.
Areas for investigation	Areas for investigation	Outstanding issues
	For discussion in the question time after the presentation. What were the benefits to Lancashire of the secondment to CSCI?	