

# Blackpool Council



**LGA Peer Challenge  
Expression of Interest  
Blackpool Council  
28 June 2013**

The changes to our health system present us with new responsibilities, challenges and unprecedented opportunities to think differently and to work collaboratively with our partners to lead change locally. However we recognise that 'reality checks' will be required along the way so that we understand our progress; we can reflect on our approaches and efforts and identify areas of improvement as we go forward, so that we can truly transform and provide effective, high quality health services which have the people of Blackpool at their heart.

In Blackpool we are very fortunate to have a good history of partnership working across the Council, NHS, VCS and wider partners; we view the Health and Wellbeing Board as the ideal catalyst to build on the strength, team spirit and purpose that existed prior to its formation and to drive forward a new systems wide approach to improving health outcomes and reducing health inequalities for the people of Blackpool. There is already a shared sense of commitment, priorities and a clear understanding of our health and social care challenges as well as the impact of wider determinants - there are no competing priorities - which is a great advantage. We all agree that there is no single agency that has the solution to the 'wicked issues' we face as a town - the Health and Wellbeing Board is the only place where they can be addressed. However we do not want to fall into complacency as our existing structures work well and continue to do so, being challenged and supported through Peer Challenge will enable us to explore such issues at a more granular level.

Participating in a Peer Challenge will enable us to move further and faster in driving forward the focus and work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and to maintain the momentum from the Board's first inward looking event held earlier this year. A number of actions and ambitions were identified at the event which the Board has made a commitment to work towards during their first twelve months of operation. These include:

- Developing and refining the evidence base to support decision making - output data is strong but more work needs to be done in understanding outcomes and reflecting these in strategy;
- Working with greater precision and operating effectively on a clear set of priorities with workable and realistic action plans;
- Redefining or aligning resources/budgets;

- Focusing on the leadership role - enabling wider partners to understand their contribution and influence within the new health and wellbeing system

We firmly believe that the right people are sat around the Health and Wellbeing Board table and that the Board is in good position in terms of its strategic leverage, capacity, skill and expertise. Additionally, our Elected Members across the political spectrum work extremely well together and have a mutual positive ambition for Blackpool that mirrors that of the Council and the Board. However we can do more to build on our solid foundations, further developing relationships within a new health system so perspectives and differences can be even better understood and ensuring there is local democratic leadership of strategies and commissioning.

We feel this an opportune time for a reality check through Peer Challenge and would very much welcome and value the voice of critical friends, we cannot work in isolation or operate effectively without drawing in appropriate expertise, support and learning from best practice through our peers. It will be an empowering and enabling opportunity for us all.

The Board has finalised their first, two year joint health and wellbeing strategy and aligned this to the relevant plans and strategies across the Council and CCG that will help to deliver the vision and priorities within it. However this process needs to be tightened and rationalised, we need to improve connections between our departments and services and those of our wider partners. Whilst the JSNA as a 'finger-tip knowledge' process and the identification of priorities recognised in the strategy has been viewed as good, we need to do more in terms of identifying outcomes for the population and knowing what these are – our Alcohol strategy and the CCG hypertension campaign (What's Your Number) were seen as good examples but this is not matched across other strategies.

Thematic debates on priority areas have worked well and are particularly helpful for other organisations/wider partnerships so that they understand their influence and contribution to the health agenda or areas that are not specialist to them and vice versa. Our aim is that each priority area is underpinned by a coherent and robust action plan that explains how the priority will be addressed, who the lead partners are; the resource implications; expected outcomes and the timescales, and the intention is that for each lead to report into the Board's Strategic Commissioning Group on progress and this is the area/process we would specifically require a peer challenge to explore.

We recognise there is a long way to go, but the support of a team of peers to review our process and offer supportive challenge would be very valuable. This would also serve to identify where there are gaps in the system and how can we start to address these going forward.

We are planning our second inward looking development event in October, therefore if we were successful in our bid, a peer challenge in January 2014 would be beneficial.

To discuss our expression of interest or for further information please contact Traci Lloyd-Moore in the first instance, at [traci.lloyd-moore@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:traci.lloyd-moore@blackpool.gov.uk) or call 01253 476392