

THE BEACON COUNCIL SCHEME

**Leading and Learning:
Perceptions and attitudes towards the Beacon
Council Scheme and motivations for attending
events**

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**The Beacon Council Scheme
Leading and Learning
Report: Stage 1**

Motivations for attending Beacon events

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The Beacon Council Scheme Leading and Learning Report: Stage 1

Motivations for attending Beacon events

1. Summary

This report provides information about the first phase of the research project which is monitoring and evaluating the Beacon Council Scheme.

The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions and the Improvement and Development Agency commissioned the Local Government Centre at Warwick Business School to undertake an evaluation of the Beacon Council Scheme, starting in May 2000.

The research project will focus upon three key aspects of the Beacon Council Scheme:

- The ways in which participating authorities learn how to improve.
- Improvements in internal and external processes.
- Improvements in service outcomes, stemming from the changes in processes.

Part 1 of the research will provide detailed information about which authorities participate in Beacon council events, the motivations for attending of those who attend on behalf of local authorities and the learning that participants believe that they have taken back to their authorities. Stage 1 examines the motivations of participants for attending Beacon events.

A combination of two focus groups and 47 telephone interviews were conducted to explore two broad areas of enquiry:

- Attitudes to the Beacon Council Scheme as a whole.
- Attitudes towards and experiences of Beacon events.

Respondents expressed a positive response to the scheme in general and to the underlying concepts of identifying and sharing best practice in local government. All types of authority were interested in attending dissemination activities and the majority of authorities attended at least one event in the first year of the scheme. However, a number of those in favour of the scheme expressed concern about the practicalities of implementation.

Participants were motivated to find out about practice in other authorities and to compare this with their own performance and practice.

Authorities were particularly keen to learn from those authorities of a similar size and context.

Differing dissemination and learning implications emerged, related to distinct roles. Constructive suggestions were made by respondents for ways in which the marketing of the scheme may be improved.

2. Introduction

This report provides detailed information about the first phase of the research project, which is concerned to monitor and evaluate the first year of the Beacon Council Scheme in England. Stage 1 is specifically examining which authorities attended the first Beacon council events, who attended on their behalf and their motivations for attending.

In particular the research has focused on members and officers

- Perceptions, attitudes and expectations about the Beacon Council Scheme in general.
- Motivations for attending the events organised under the scheme.
- Perceived barriers to participating in the events.

3. Context

The Beacon Council Scheme is an integral part of the Government's wider 'modernisation and improvement' agenda - designed (in the words of the Local Government White Paper for England) to produce 'a radical refocusing of councils' traditional roles' and a 'fundamental shift of culture throughout local government' (Cm 4014, 1998, p. 5).

The aim is to build up local capacity within local government to transform existing organisational cultures so as to produce rapid improvements in service standards and cost effectiveness.

One of the assumptions of the scheme is that processes of modernisation and continuous improvement can be promoted by encouraging authorities to learn from those councils which currently perform best – both in terms of the processes by which they design, plan and deliver local services, and in terms of service outcomes themselves.

“Beacon status is not about a badge. It is awarded so that others can benefit from the experience of those councils which have excellence to share in the service areas which have been selected” (The Beacon Council Scheme, Programme of events 2000-2001 1999, Foreword).

Nearly 200 local authorities applied for Beacon status in the first year of the scheme, many of them making multiple applications for up to the maximum of three awards, in the seven selected service areas. (See appendices for details of the seven themes). Of these, 68 applications were short-listed, leading to 42 councils involved in 33 applications being recognised as centres of excellence.

A total of 1352 participants attended 12 roadshows, including attendance from Welsh authorities. There was total attendance of 1790 participants at 31 open days, drawing upon a wider audience, which included non-English authorities and representatives of other organisations.

The first programme of events aimed to encourage all councils to participate in the scheme, through a range of structured activities, which included presentation of Beacon themes at roadshows, opportunities for exchange of information and ideas at Beacon council open days and supplementary dissemination activities, designed to develop learning.

The scheme is not intended to be seen in isolation from the framework for modernisation. This has been made more explicit in the second year of the scheme. *“All councils can and should take up the opportunities the beacon scheme offers to learn from the best. It will help councils to achieve continuous improvement in the quality of local services which best value now demands of them” (The Beacon Council Scheme, application brochure 2000, p.2).*

For the longer term, the research project will examine the extent to which the dissemination of good practice can promote the kinds of improvements and cultural change that the government is seeking across local government as a whole. Evidence will be collected to assess the linkages between stages in the learning process and the extent to which this has resulted in internal changes and ultimately in improvements in service delivery.

4. Purpose and Structure of the Focus Groups and Telephone Interviews

Aims

The research brief was to identify the key reasons for participating or not in Beacon events. The aim was to collect qualitative information about:

- Perceptions and attitudes towards the scheme as a whole.
- The reasons why people would come to events.
- The reasons why they might not come to events.
- What potential participants would hope to gain from the events.

Methods

The combining of methods, two focus groups and telephone interviews were designed to provide both an in-depth exploration of viewpoints as well as ensure breadth of coverage. The original brief suggested focusing on seeking the views of potential attendees in the focus groups.

However, based on the researchers experience of early telephone interviews and concerns about the difficulties of reaching non-participants it was felt that the opportunity to seek views from both attenders and non-attenders would be beneficial in allowing the researchers to focus on the key reasons for participating or not in Beacon events and in particular in being able to explore the views of those who may be more reticent about participation. It was felt that event attenders would be able to provide an informed view of areas for improvement and for attracting non-attendees. In addition, this approach has informed our consideration for the feasibility study.

The research team based the interpretation of attendance and non-attendance on whether or not *any* officers and/or members of a local authority had attended any Beacon event. It may be that an authority may have had one or two service directorates choosing to attend events but not others. Given the small scale of the research at this stage, it was not feasible to pursue this level of exploration of participation any further.

The researchers used three methods to contact and select participants:

- The database of event attendance provided by the IDeA.
- Approach to corporate officers, such as Heads of Policy.
- Written invitation to all local authority Chief Executives.

Potential participants completed a reply slip, which indicated whether the respondent had attended a Beacon event or intended to do so.

For event attendants the research team selected potential focus group participants and telephone interviewees from the IDeA database of participants, which has been constructed from two sources of information, delegate registrations and event attendance. The database includes details of the theme of the event and job role of participants as well as contact details and type of authority. We used the following criteria:

- Local Authority type - Metropolitan, District, County, Unitary or London.
- Themes of the Beacon Council Scheme.
- Corporate or operational.
- Councillor or officer.
- Gender of participant.

The database was then used to identify non-participants by comparing against the population of all English local authorities. However, preliminary telephone interviews revealed significant inaccuracies in the database (estimated at 20%) which meant that our sampling base would be unreliable.

In addition, our preliminary phone calls suggested that reaching non-attenders would be very difficult, as most authorities appeared to be participating in Beacon events. In order to sample from a broader base in the short time available, the research team initiated an invitation to all English local authorities, via the Chief Executive, to take part in the research.

We conducted 47 telephone interviews and two complete focus groups of a total of 12 attenders and non-attenders. Across the two methods, there were a total of 35 attendees and 24 non-attendees. There were four non-attendees out of a total of 12 focus group participants and 20 non-attendees out of a total of 47 telephone interviewees (see Appendices for detailed breakdown).

This approach enabled the team to complete all the fieldwork on time. However, the letter of invitation to all local authorities, with the short time scale created some irritation for a number of local authorities.

Key research questions and issues

Most of the telephone interviews were completed prior to the focus groups. This enabled the researchers to explore issues that had been raised in the interviews in more depth in the focus group discussions.

It also became clear from comparison between the telephone and focus groups sample that the focus groups represented to some degree a self-selecting group of participants. By this we mean that the focus group participants were motivated to attend by their strong feelings about the scheme and thus represented a selective viewpoint. We have taken this into account in our analysis. The telephone survey therefore played a crucial role in providing a broader perspective on the Beacon events and scheme as a whole.

There were practical difficulties in reaching elected members for the research. Only a small number of members were included in the final sample (two in the focus groups and three in the telephone survey). However, this is similar to the small number of members attending events as a whole.

The findings from members are clearly not representative; they are however indicative of the issues for members and important for this reason, even if at this stage, we are unable to ascertain their frequency. In addition, a number of officers provided helpful comments and insight into the roles and perspectives of members in the scheme.

The questions were designed and formulated by the LGC research team in consultation with the IDeA, using expectancy and motivation theory (Klandermans, 1984) as a framework. Expectations are an important element in motivation. Individuals will have varying motivations and will place different value on anticipated outcomes. It was therefore reasonable to assume that there would not be the same motivations for individuals in attending Beacon events. These issues were explored in our analysis and produced some implications for marketing of future events.

Two broad areas of enquiry were pursued:

- Attitudes towards the scheme as a whole, whether the authority had prepared a bid for Beacon status, succeeded or not.
- Attitudes towards and experiences of Beacon events themselves. (See Appendices for the full questionnaire and focus group guidelines).

5. Key Themes

5.1 The Beacon scheme in general

Attractions of the scheme

The majority of participants in both the telephone survey and the focus groups positively welcomed the scheme and many expressed genuine enthusiasm. They endorsed the underlying philosophy and concept of identifying and sharing best practice, and appreciated the opportunity to share ideas and good practice with peers. Another welcome element was the recognition and encouragement to those authorities that were formally acknowledged to be doing well. This was seen as a boost to morale generally for local authorities.

“The concept of spreading best practice and encouraging change is excellent” (senior manager).

“If a council has a Beacon service, then you’re saying from a Best Value point of view, that’s where you should be aiming” (service manager).

The Beacon scheme was clearly identified by some participants and in particular by Chief Executives and senior managers, as one part of the modernising agenda with Best Value as another key strand. With this in mind, they wanted a full picture of how Beacon councils perform and therefore some officers went to events specifically to collect Performance Indicators and benchmarks, with the intention of setting challenging targets for their own service.

Barriers

Respondents expressed considerable concern about the resource implications of the scheme and in particular of gaining recognition both in terms of the application process and the resources required to promote and disseminate good practice. This was true even of those authorities that viewed the scheme positively. This frequently reflected a desire on the part of authorities to be able to participate fully in the scheme and to actively demonstrate quality through their dissemination activities.

Time, staff workloads and costs were all perceived to be resource factors. Indeed, some felt that Beacon was one scheme, which in practice was in competition with other initiatives within the authority for scarce resources.

A small number of respondents expressed a significant degree of scepticism and even cynicism about the value of the scheme, the transparency of the selection process and the application of selection criteria. They perceived a contradiction between the collaboration that is intended through sharing best practice and the competitive process of applying for Beacon status.

“It came at a time when there was scepticism about new initiatives. It’s been difficult to get something of relevance for us. That’s not to say that we’re not participating but as a strategic move, it didn’t grab managers’ attention or members’. Managerially we felt we need to focus on Best Value because of limited resources” (Chief Executive).

Senior managers and policy officers perceived a lack of explicit integration of the Beacon scheme with other elements of the modernisation agenda and this was a serious concern.

“...it confirmed for me how fragmented the thinking on good practice is. It doesn’t feel joined up. How does it fit in with all the other initiatives, for example Community Safety initiatives?” (service manager).

Undecided

Some participants are still undecided about the scheme. These participants expressed mixed feelings, agreeing with the principle of the scheme but disagreeing with its implementation and practice and in general were waiting for the scheme to demonstrate its value and relevance to them. These views came particularly from small authorities and Conservative controlled authorities.

“Mixed feelings. The principle is sound, it’s right for all local authorities to aspire to... but I have some worries that Beacon councils will be treated differently in the way in which funding is provided... it could be divisive” (Chief Executive).

“I think the idea is good, holding up good practice... I’m a little bit disappointed – I thought it would be more radical...I’d like to see more looking at design and delivery of services, more transparency. More involvement with residents” (service manager).

“The idea is good but now I’m sceptical. I thought it was about Best Value, delivering best value...because our costs here are very low, anything I do looks expensive to members...X authority has been given Beacon status but their costs are through the roof and I don’t think that’s best value” (service manager).

Others, particularly operational staff, felt they had insufficient information on the scheme to be able to express a clear view. Some senior officers said they were considering alternative strategies to achieve quality standards, such as Charter Mark and they were not convinced by the scheme.

“If it’s a carrot approach, then they didn’t integrate that with other carrot approaches... it’s clearly a duplication of all the work that Charter Mark is doing, IIP is doing...it looks to me to be a straightforward case of lack of joined up thinking” (Chief Executive).

Many operational managers and officers expressed the view that they already had well-established networks and opportunities for sharing with neighbouring authorities: Best Value was seen as an existing driver for this kind of activity.

Political perspectives

Senior officers and councillors tended to view the scheme predominantly from a political perspective. Although the idea of promoting excellence was applauded in principle, the incentives of the scheme were less clear to them.

“About time... central government has been seen as clobbering local authorities that are failing, not encouraging those that are succeeding” (Assistant Chief Executive).

“It’s an opportunity for the DETR to flagship certain authorities” (Chief Executive).

A small but significant number of participants expressed a highly politicised and negative view of the scheme, which they saw as lacking in joined up thinking. They were concerned that some of the selected Beacon councils are not able to demonstrate good all round performance. Indeed, they felt that whole council assessments and awards could only be seen in a political light and therefore they would prefer a scheme focused on specific services.

“Although given for a service, the award is to a Beacon council and therefore there is a political element” (service manager).

Some politicians saw the scheme as irrelevant against a background of policy with the effect of dismantling local government.

“All the major announcements are actually about dismantling local government ... so the whole scheme becomes trivialised” (councillor).

5.2 Experience of bidding

First round

Approximately one third of participants’ authorities had not made a bid in the first round and about half had made an unsuccessful bid. The remainder included successful authorities and those who did not know whether their authority had made a bid.

The successful authorities were pleased to have been awarded Beacon status, were proud of their services and clearly believed in the value of the scheme in promoting shared learning. Their expectations were that reciprocal learning would take place.

“We’re very pleased to be a Beacon service but the current feeling is that it needs a lot of resources... we’re not getting much concrete pay back and reciprocity... The open days... may be appropriate for some themes but there may be better ways of sharing good practice” (Head of Policy).

A major issue for both the successful and unsuccessful authorities was the scale of additional resources required to make the bid, at a time when the change agenda and in particular, preparation for Best Value, was making significant resource demands on the authority.

“No we haven’t [bid] – we’ve just completed Charter Mark -It’s a resource issue and we’re waiting to see how Best Value impacts. We’re a small authority- it’s easy for a big authority... we could be totally dominated by Best Value” (Chief Executive).

Some authorities that might have bid were deterred by their lack of resources to deliver quality dissemination activities required of a Beacon council.

“Having moved from central to local government, I can see how few people are available with time in their jobs to prepare these sort of applications... they are busy delivering services... I hadn’t appreciated that until I moved to local government” (Assistant Chief Executive).

Participants from local authorities that were unsuccessful in their bids had two distinct responses. Some appreciated the application process, the feedback sessions to applicants and the learning that they had gained about the authority’s performance. A number of participants explained that their authority was actively seeking to make improvements, particularly in the area of corporate performance.

“Good learning experience ...our education element was highly thought of but we were too patchy on the general authority... a fair reflection of where we are” (member).

Others were disappointed by the outcome and expressed dissatisfaction that the criteria had not been sufficiently clear. These participants felt that the feedback session did not adequately address the gaps and how their authority could improve.

A number of senior officers expressed sympathy for short-listed authorities that had evidence of excellent achievement, which might also be of value to others but which could not be included in the scheme.

A number of officers informed us that members did not view the Beacon scheme as a priority. The small number of members we spoke to was not particularly well informed about the scheme. One “backbencher” felt distanced from the scheme because of the introduction of a cabinet style of political arrangements.

Second round

Respondents were asked about their views on bidding for the second round of the scheme.

Approximately one third of respondents had decided not to apply, a few were still considering making an application but only six respondents had made the decision to go ahead. Although the closing date for applications has yet to be reached, this suggests less active bidding in the second compared with the first round. There was a range of reasons why authorities would not apply but the primary factor was related to limited resources. Morale was also cited by some, who felt less enthusiastic as a result of unsuccessful but resource intensive applications. Others felt over-committed due to other elements of modernisation, or else under-resourced.

A small number were deliberately deferring making an application until their overall performance had improved, were pursuing other quality standards. Some considered that the categories open to District councils were too limited. Others felt that they had too many structural and organisational issues and tensions to deal with.

“We have a situation where there has been tension between the County and the District which has improved – but there is so much to sort out internally, we couldn’t do a sustained bid” (councillor).

A few senior managers expressed the belief that the outcome was predetermined and that the criteria were not explicit. One person had a cynical view that although the Best Value culture does encourage collaboration, the prior CCT culture has *“gone deep into the psyche”* of some local government officers, so cultural change will be slow.

“We considered applying... but not in the next round. It was interesting that X authority was shortlisted but got criticised by Ofsted. There’s a mismatch of different agendas” (senior manager).

“We’ve not participated and we won’t be. We are observers from the outside but we don’t have time to make bids – we’re up to our necks. It’s a lot of effort for a moderate chance of success” (chief officer).

5.3 Key challenges

The responses from participants highlighted a number of key challenges that in their view, the Beacon scheme would need to address, to continue to be successful.

The relevance and credibility of the scheme were reported to be by far the most critical issues. Respondents were concerned that the scheme should take account of the diversity of local authorities in terms of respective size, capacity and responsibilities, so that each could compete within an appropriate ‘class’ or ‘family’. Senior managers and service managers said they would prefer to see in successive years a selection of themes offering practical opportunities for proposing different models of best practice in order to promote flexibility, rather than standardisation. Senior managers felt that the scheme needs to be promoted and understood as fully integrated with other elements of the modernisation agenda.

“The main challenge to the IDeA is to get local authorities to buy into the process... and getting the message across that now local government can’t stand still” (service manager).

“There is a perception that we need a carrot and stick approach towards improving councils, as part of the...thing that I would buy into, which is improvement, continuous improvement, which is not necessarily the same as modernisation” (Chief Executive).

A number of senior managers and policy officers saw the credibility of the scheme being reliant upon the selected Beacon councils’ ability to stand up to close scrutiny and to fully demonstrate the evidence of improvement as well as methods used to achieve this.

In order to maintain momentum and interest, officers wanted to see tangible benefits for selected Beacons. Also of concern was the impact, potentially negative, on unsuccessful applicants and respondents described a tangible impact on morale as a result of their experience of bidding in the first round. The ambiguity over the longer-term rewards of the scheme is a major disincentive.

“The current Beacons need a payoff for their effort and others will need to see this or think ‘Why bother?’ ” (policy officer).

The process of dissemination of good practice and promotion of learning has not been consistently well managed and this was attributed both to the individual Beacon council and the IDeA, in relation to the design and administration of events. This was of particular concern to senior officers who were keen to establish the outcomes of learning in terms of cultural change and service improvement.

“The challenge is demonstrating that the mechanism of transfer of knowledge and best practice actually delivers change” (service manager).

The application process was seen by many officers, in the first year of the scheme, as too complex and resource intensive. Although respondents felt improvements have been made by central government in the process for the second year and a greater balance between rigour and bureaucracy there was a significant level of cynicism about the scheme.

“The key is to demonstrate that not being a Beacon council makes a difference in the quality of service provided...so much of what makes you a Beacon is about the culture of your organisation. The thing that annoys us is that to be a Beacon you have to be a fully signed up member of the modernisation club” (Head of Policy).

A further challenge is to secure the interest and participation of elected members, who are reported to have had limited contact with the scheme.

“I’m open-minded and open to persuasion ...but I’d have to be persuaded that there would be benefit derived from going there...and that the subject matter seems to me to be important from the point of view of my authority and maybe the contribution that I can make...then I might do but otherwise I would be looking at it at the very minimum with scepticism and the maximum with cynicism” (councillor).

5.4 Motivations for attending events

Our preparations for sampling, for the focus group and later survey showed that most authorities had either attended or were planning to attend events. Only a small proportion of respondents felt they were unlikely to attend Beacon events.

Comparing practice

For most respondents, the primary motivations for attending a Beacon event were the opportunity to find out about practice elsewhere, to compare against their own performance and practice (functional benchmarking) and to support the development of Best Value within their own authorities.

Participants said that they actively sought authorities with similar characteristics to learn from. So for example, size and role of authority, rural versus inner-city, resource base and so on were characteristics which officers sought to consider in choosing whether to visit a Beacon council or not. Locality or proximity was often secondary to these considerations.

Officers were keen to consider the role of context and circumstances in developing their approaches to improvement. District councils in particular were concerned with the need to compare like with like as far as possible, feeling that as small players, they were disadvantaged when it came to competing for Beacon status.

“I suggest they break the structure up and compare UA’s with UA’s, Mets with Mets, and high crime with high crime, and that small DC’s up in the wilds have something reasonable with which to compare, to see a small council award, then if we know who our family groups are...why reinvent the wheel?” (service manager).

A number of participants felt that the Beacon events presented a special opportunity to learn and to exchange useful information on good practice, regardless of family group. On the whole though, this viewpoint was shared by service managers rather than those in more senior roles.

“It’s knowing how others are doing the work” (service manager).

“I want to go to the roadshow and see all the statistics and targets” (service manager).

“They were so open and we were able to talk and for the first time I really felt we had an opportunity” (service manager).

Modernisation agenda

Senior role players such as Chief Executives and senior managers tended to view Beacon events within the overall context of the modernisation agenda. They had already established learning networks and were already seeking learning opportunities of their own accord. For these participants Beacon events were perceived at best as complimentary to existing learning opportunities and at worst as irrelevant or on the periphery to the core business of engendering change.

“We’re always looking at new ways of doing things. I don’t promote Beacons above anything else” (Chief Executive).

“We’ll send someone if it looks relevant, not because its Beacon” (Chief Executive).

Chief Executives and senior managers were largely concerned with supporting the development of Best Value in broad terms and encouraging the development of innovation and ideas.

“Other issues are more important – modernising issues or electronic government or inspection on Best Value for example. We’re balancing priorities all the time. Practical workshops are the most important rather than ‘big wigs’. Managerially, the more you can get mixed cross fertilisation across services, the better whereas at present Beacons doesn’t allow this. It’s about drawing people together across our organisation” (Chief Executive).

However, others had a desire to understand more about the ways in which authorities had succeeded in achieving Beacon status.

Confirmation of improvement

A number of officers commented on the value of attending events in conjunction with senior managers, members, and other partners. For these officers, the events provided an opportunity to affirm the quality of their own authority’s service and approach. The involvement of elected members in particular was seen to be helpful as a way of providing a development opportunity and raising awareness of the need for change. (Some officers however did not feel that Beacon events were relevant for members.)

Some viewed a Beacon event in an inter-agency context.

“We didn’t get any interest from members, but we are planning to take some tenants with us, we’ve got a very active tenants alliance...” (service manager).

“The events enabled councils to show off and hear about the good things going on, It’s an opportunity to compare schemes. Real partnership was shown. I persuaded my Liberal Democrat and Labour colleagues to go, and an officer and they thought it was wonderful” (member).

Practical information

Service managers on the other hand were largely concerned with the collection of more detailed information, such as Performance Indicators, targets and the 'nitty gritty' details of how to improve service delivery and management.

"It's getting a sense of the full picture and how they perform. It would be useful to get a full stat pack, turn around 14 days that kind of thing, cost per case..." (service manager).

"The roadshow at Leicester was very good. One of the things we came back with was a tenants newsletter which had all the PI's in..." (service manager).

For these service managers, practical workshops during Beacon events were valued over and above other aspects.

"...there is a contrast between an inspirational lecture and a workshop where you work through problems and then stay in touch, that's the most useful resource" (service manager).

Change strategies

A number of respondents commented on the desire to learn about how Beacon councils had achieved change and improvement over time. They not only wanted to know about the detail of current service delivery, but how they had achieved changes in direction, step changes and so on.

"The thing is a lot of these Beacon councils have gone from A to B and we need to know how they have achieved the change by understanding the background" (senior manager).

Need to be seen

A few participants admitted that they felt pressure to attend Beacon events, that it was considered a good thing to be seen to be attending.

"The information came through and a number of us said we need to go to this. But I'm sure we get monitored on whether we attend or not" (service manager).

"Generally we are keen for people to go, because when the auditors come in for Best Value, one of the things they look for is have you been to the roadshows" (service manager).

5.5 Learning from the events

There was a wide variety in participants' expectations of what they might be able to learn, the different forms of knowledge that might be available and how readily this might be transferred into their own organisation. Some were seeking explicit facts and figures about service performance, which they could use to set targets for improvement within their own service. Others, particularly service managers, wanted written guidance on practice or procedures.

Strategic managers and policy staff appeared to be more interested in innovation and ideas than in the 'nuts and bolts'.

Some participants appeared to be expecting 'quick fix' solutions from a single visit to a Beacon authority: fewer acknowledged that the process of knowledge transfer would be complex and these participants talked about establishing longer-term relationships with a Beacon council. Some senior managers wanted to understand the change processes that had been used, so as to make cultural change within their own authority, rather than to aim to replicate outcomes.

"People will be able to come away with good solid information that relates to professional standards and can translate into management action...a new mindset on how to put things into practice in a new way" (Chief Executive).

"Improvement programmes aren't quick wins – you've got to keep at it for some time. Messages have to be given and re-given – we're trying to move a giant" (senior manager).

The research explored the learning that participants had gained from attending Beacon events. The responses highlighted specific concrete learning examples such as the sharing of technical details, as well as broader conceptual learning such as the role of partnerships and members in supporting change and an awareness of the differences in resourcing in their own authorities compared to others.

Others commented on their preferred learning styles, such as a desire for more practical workshops rather than introductory speakers. In particular, service managers actively sought out discussion with fellow service managers, to enable more detailed discussion than was often allowed for during formal sessions.

"I got most out of talking to people informally – nothing from the key speakers – most people relate to those who are really doing the job and bounce ideas"

Officers commented on the importance of being able to learn from others mistakes, that they did not want a glossy presentation that did not address real learning.

"It was good to see what was happening in communities first hand, and warts and all" (service manager).

"I would like Beacon authorities to realise we are not all wonderful – not pretending everything is perfect. We've got to be humble about our practice, it is a risk but I think it shows integrity, we're fed up with spin doctors" (senior manager).

For many of the respondents, learning was enhanced through comparison and experience of delivery in a variety of local authorities in addition to Beacon councils.

Authorities employed different dissemination strategies for transferring knowledge from attendance at events. The approach was often linked to decision-making processes about attendance. In some authorities, the corporate management team or the Chief Executive made decisions about attendance at specific Beacon events. In these councils, there was often an expectation that feedback would be provided to the corporate management team, as well as to those officers within the relevant service. In a very few cases, it was expected that elected members would also receive some feedback.

In other local authorities, decisions about event attendance were delegated to service managers. In these authorities, feedback was usually given to colleagues and team members within that service.

In a small number of authorities, a decision was taken for elected members, senior and operational officers to attend events together, as a means to promote effective dissemination and application of knowledge. Critical mass is therefore an emergent issue, which will need to be explored further, in terms of attendance, dissemination of learning and the authority to implement new ideas.

5.6 Publicity and marketing

There were three main marketing documents. A detailed programme of events was disseminated by the DETR, which described each Beacon council's best practice and dissemination proposals. Two flyers were produced by the IDeA, one describing the roadshows in February and a second leaflet describing the open days in March. In addition, some individual Beacon councils produced their own publicity and marketing.

For the most part respondents were positive about the publicity for the Beacon events, both in terms of style and dissemination.

"The publicity was excellent and attractive" (Chief Executive).

"The best came from the IDeA – it was extremely good because you could find what you needed and it was well done" (senior manager).

However, a number of criticisms were made about the late timing of the publicity and that this affected the ability to attend in some instances. Very few respondents were aware of forthcoming events. Some found publicity coming independently from Beacon councils confusing and felt that this could be co-ordinated by the IDeA.

Some constructive suggestions were made for improving publicity and marketing. These included targeting events more effectively. For example members and officers commented on the different needs of members, officers and other partners and suggested a more differentiated approach to marketing and structuring the Beacon events.

“Councillors are busy people, the day job comes first and the challenge is to disseminate to councillors. It’s learning and training for them” (member).

Some suggested that a marketing approach which reflected the different Year 1 themes would be helpful.

One or two participants felt that participation from people other than officers was not actively encouraged and that it was important in today’s environment to give consideration to the involvement of partners and target accordingly:

“I think it’s important to encourage other sectors to be involved – especially where partnership issues are writ large” (service manager).

“The marketing is haphazard and it’s unrealistic to expect members to come in the day...They [IDeA] need to link up better with the LGA – members are already tapped into these structures – so I think to build into these structures rather than something new and put events on in evenings and weekends as well. There is no easy answer” (senior manager).

Others commented on the usefulness of information via e-mail and the Internet, but felt that there was room for improvement. Two members in particular commented on the frustrations of receiving CD-ROMs from the roadshows but being unable to access them due to software problems.

5.7 Administration and charges

Overall, most respondents were happy with the administration of events. However, those respondents who had experienced difficulties in booking events or where events had been cancelled were dissatisfied.

One respondent from a Beacon status council was particularly dissatisfied with the administration and marketing support received from the IDeA and felt that the service had potentially jeopardised the success of the event. In order to remedy this the authority had resourced its own marketing. This respondent felt strongly that Beacon councils were customers who should have a choice in the provision of marketing and administrative support.

Some participants objected to the levy of a charge for attendance at events and felt that this acted as a barrier to smaller councils in particular and to other partners. They felt this was especially the case for community representation. One or two officers suggested that the invoicing system for attending events did not complement those of local authorities and that this should be considered in future.

5.8 Event design

There are three types of event in the first phase of dissemination. Roadshows, offered on a regional basis, showcased all Beacon councils within one theme. Open days are organised by individual Beacon councils to explain their practice in more detail. A range of learning activities, such as action learning sets and shadowing are offered as part of the individual dissemination programme by each Beacon.

Many participants, at all levels of operation, commented on the benefits of practical workshops, rather than broad overviews from introductory speakers. This was the view on open days in particular.

Some felt that the roadshows were useful in providing an overview and that this then enabled them to decide which open days to attend.

Others suggested that the roadshows and open days be viewed as different events for different target audiences. For example, roadshows could be taken to local authorities, perhaps on a regional basis and could provide a more tailored approach to local authorities in the regions.

Some felt that the roadshows could provide an ideal vehicle for targeting and reaching members, other partners (such as the police and health authorities) and that the open days should be targeted towards officers as the primary audience. In other words the Beacon events could be differentiated and marketed accordingly.

“The events can’t be all things for all people. The roadshow format might be good to encourage people from other sectors and the open days are good for practitioners” (senior manager).

“The roadshows should move around and go to the local authorities and tailor specifically to the needs of different local authorities and view it as a training day for councillors” (senior manager).

Many officers and the members included in the research felt that the needs of members needed to be taken into account in structuring and timing events. One suggestion was that some events need to be held during weekends and evenings to enable members to attend. Others suggested the need to think about dovetailing into existing agenda’s and approaches:

“I don’t think they’re [members] fully aware of Beacons. We’re re-educating them [members] so they’ve got their heads round Best Value first. Beacons should be in tandem with Best Value” (service manager).

“I need members to link with the IDeA and to want to be there (Beacon events). One suggestion is to have a regular IDeA meeting for members for the SW region with an introduction about the service. The DETR have done this, they should build on this” (service manager).

One member in particular supported the idea of building on existing approaches and structures as a way of reaching members. She suggested reaching members by working more closely with the LGA. This member also felt that the timing of events was not always helpful because members’ diaries were often full and they needed plenty of advance notice. For this reason she had organised a visit to a council independently of the Beacon timetable.

A number of respondents commented on the need to build a rolling programme of events and to build on the initiative so that events are not viewed as 'one-off' opportunities in isolation, but part of a long term development programme in which officers and members can build on networks and relationships to learn from each other. One officer suggested the following approach:

“One-off events have their place but in the longer term they are not necessarily the best way to engage. There must be a way for Beacon councils to write up their practice and dilemmas and share this by email to make it more dynamic and drip feed. There are forums but we need to try and get rid of the geographical barriers” (service manager).

A number of participants felt that the format for events within the scheme was too restrictive, did not necessarily enhance the sharing of good practice, and did not empower local authorities in their approaches to learning.

5.9 Barriers to participating at events

The most commonly cited barrier to participating at Beacon events was distance. This was an issue particularly for smaller authorities where the cost of travelling was often prohibitive. However, the type of location was also a major factor in deciding whether to attend or not. Prospective participants are concerned, as stated earlier, about attending events where they feel they have most to learn through comparison, and thus finding Beacon councils that can be similarly compared is seen as key.

However, standing back as researchers from this suggestion, it may also be that putting effort into interpreting similarities and differences could be helpful.

Other factors that affect a decision to attend or not include:

- Costs that will be incurred.
- The relevance of themes.
- The amount of notice given so that a full day out of the office can be planned for, lack of early information about the full programme to enable forward planning and rescheduling /cancellation of events.
- In addition, a number of respondents cited the lack of interest from members as a barrier to participation.
- Lack of perceived added-value of Beacon events such as 'We're already doing it, we don't need Beacons.'
- Competition from other events and initiative fatigue so that Beacon events are seen as one among many.
- Lack of a rolling programme of events so that if one themed event is missed there will be another opportunity.
- The political labelling of Beacon events acts as a barrier to some Conservative controlled local authorities.

6. Implications for the Marketing of the Beacon Scheme

Most respondents were willing and interested to learn more about improving practice and service delivery through the Beacon events. The IDeA might improve accessibility to events by considering:

- Regrouping Beacon councils into regional packages or 'families' using contextual criteria such as size/locality/resources etc to facilitate comparison.
- Differentiating between roadshows and open day events and market accordingly.
- Taking the roadshows to groups of local authorities and use a development opportunity for members and other partners.
- Linking the promotion and structure of events to other key developments such as Best Value and demonstrate the added value of linkage.
- Offering guidelines for the open days to Beacon councils based on feedback from this research, such as providing a statistics pack, give priority to workshops and so on.
- Giving greater flexibility to local authorities in the format of learning events. Consider developing the role of the IDeA in reaching and supporting the development of members and maximising the contribution of authorities.
- Reflecting how best to build on the events and facilitate longer-term learning.
- Using the Internet as a way of building further linkage and circumventing the barriers of geography.
- Allowing the option for resourcing marketing and administration for Beacon councils in the management of their events.
- Providing a rolling programme, longer-term planning and greater notice for events.
- Increasing accuracy of database records of attendance at events.

7. Implications for the Scheme More Generally

The IDeA and DETR could seek to improve perceptions of the scheme in general by considering:

- Expressing greater explicit connection between the Beacon Council Scheme and other strands of modernisation, especially Best Value and the peer review process, using the Local Government Improvement model.
- Clarifying the preferred quality and improvement schemes and awards and their linkage to the Beacon scheme.
- Including as part of the marketing strategy, clarification and promotion of the direct, tangible benefits of achieving Beacon status to a council.
- Increasing the transparency of the selection criteria and selection process.
- Encouraging greater flexibility for local interpretation of the scheme.
- Providing increased resources for dissemination activities.

8. Implications for Later Stages of Research

The initial interpretation placed upon the notion of attendance or non-attendance by the researchers assumed that there were likely to be local authorities that did not actively participate in the dissemination activities. The database of attendance and the evidence from this research suggest that the concept of 'non-attendance' is more complex.

The initial indications are that there are patterns of attendance from within authorities and that patterns of 'non-attendance' and low attendance are related to distinct roles, such as elected members, rather than to whole authorities.

A number of respondents identified partner agencies, cross-agency consortia, external contractors and outsourced services as appropriate but non-attending participants, whose presence would contribute to joined-up services and cross-cutting practice.

Other respondents felt quite strongly that local residents and service users should be included. The example of care leavers who had attended at least one of the roadshows was cited. Another issue which was raised was that it appeared that specific services were participating in the events, whilst other services had no contact with, or limited knowledge of Beacon activities. Similarly, service managers and officers were well represented, whilst elected members and Chief Executives did not appear to attend events in proportion to their numbers.

It was not possible to explore these issues at this stage of the research but a number of questions are now posed about who attends Beacon events such as:

- What level of involvement should elected members have in Beacon events and how can events be targeted at their specific learning needs?
- Should partner agencies, user groups and communities be actively encouraged to participate?

A number of authorities felt that they would be encouraged to participate if they could achieve a good match with a 'family group'. This desire to seek out a 'twin' authority may suggest that learning through an exchange of complex or sensitive information may be easier to initiate within a familiar context. However, there may be a role for facilitated learning, which helps people to acquire useful knowledge even out of apparent difference. This raises questions about the experience of authorities in acquiring knowledge and their skills in being able to use this in creating change.

A related issue is about the processes of facilitating learning. A number of participants commented on the expertise, or lack of it, that specific local authorities displayed in the design and methods used at their open day events. Some events were perceived to be well facilitated so as to engage participants and to encourage networking. Other events, particularly the roadshows were seen as lacking in this regard.

A number of general observations from this stage of the research may be relevant to subsequent stages and will therefore be borne in mind in the research design.

- The different motivations of individuals and organisations towards attending the Beacon events may lead to different preferences for types of information and different attitudes towards learning.
- There is a range of motivations for attending, which vary from needing to be seen at events to a strong motivation to learn.
- Some respondents made explicit and deliberate connections to Best Value and the Local Government Improvement model: others see the strands as separate.
- Perceptions of the scheme in general, experience of bidding and conscious linkages to Best Value also influenced the kind of learning anticipated - (some wanted to know Beacon councils' Performance Indicators and targets for own Best Value Performance Plan, others wanted to exchange experience of change processes). This may be linked to the focus of distinct roles.
- As a consequence, different methods of knowledge transfer may be required, to suit different knowledge creation and acquisition requirements.
- Short-term versus long-term learning.
- Different learning requirements for those in different roles.
- The motivation for some participants attending events was not about learning (for example being seen to be attending)
- Some desired learning may be difficult to access. (One local authority wanted to benchmark with similar authorities that had contracted out services but was not able to access this information).
- Some Beacon authorities expected to learn through information exchange and this suggests that the definition of best practice will continue to evolve.
- The design of events so as to promote knowledge acquisition and learning and the skill of the 'recipients' in being able to transfer knowledge into their own context.

9. Conclusions

The research provides a clear, initial picture of responses to the Beacon scheme in its first year and the motivations of those participating in Beacon events.

The respondents expressed a positive response to the scheme in general and to the underlying concepts of identifying and sharing best practice in local government. The scheme was understood by senior officers and elected members to be an element of modernisation and their responses were indicative of their concerns about central government policy and proposals for change. The scheme was welcomed by the majority of respondents but a substantial minority expressed scepticism and their willingness to participate in the scheme will depend upon the perception of relevance and credibility. A number of those in favour of the scheme expressed concern about the practicalities of implementation.

It became apparent very rapidly that there were very few authorities that were 'non-attenders' of Beacon events. This signals success in attracting interest from participants from all regions and all types of authority in the first year of the scheme. However, representation at events appears to have been predominantly by service managers and operational staff, with a much lower level of participation by elected members and senior managers. This suggests that the marketing of future events needs to be carefully targeted. Consideration might also be given to marketing the events to partner agencies and local communities.

The primary motivations of most respondents who attended an event were to find out about practice in other authorities and to compare this with their own authority's or service's performance and practice. Authorities were keen to achieve a 'match' with other authorities with similar characteristics to learn from.

Service managers and operational officers particularly valued detailed, practical sessions, which gave insight into concrete examples of improvement and the methods used to achieve this. They were also keen to acquire benchmarking statistics. Chief Executives and senior managers were more concerned with the development of innovation and ideas, within the broader modernisation context. There is an emerging picture of differing dissemination and learning requirements related to distinct roles.

Elected members have still to be fully engaged with the scheme and this is indicated by limited attendance at events and their reported ambivalence towards the scheme. This may be improved through targeted marketing and event design.

Overall respondents expressed an enthusiasm for learning and improvement and made a number of constructive suggestions for ways in which the events might be improved.

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Appendix 1
Composition of the Telephone Survey and Focus Groups

Type of authority	Number of participants in telephone survey	Number of participants in focus groups
County	9	1
Unitary	8	1
Metropolitan	3	0
London Borough	7	1
District	20	9
Total	47	12

Analysis of participants by type of local authority.

Role	Number of participants in telephone survey	Number of participants in focus groups
Elected Member	3	2
Chief Executive	10	1
Assistant Chief Executive/Chief Officer	7	0
Head of Policy	6	0
Head of Service	14	6
Policy Officer	1	2
Operational Officer	6	0
Best Value Officer	0	1
Total	47	12

Analysis of participants by role.

Gender	Number of participants in telephone survey	Number of participants in focus groups
Male	33	8
Female	14	4
Total	47	12

Analysis of participants by gender.

Attendance at events	Number of participants in telephone survey	Number of participants in focus groups
Attendees	27	8
Non-attendees	20	4
Total	47	12

Analysis of participants by attendance at events (includes feedback session).

Appendix 2
Research Schedule: Telephone Survey and Focus Group

BEACON TELEPHONE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Date _____

Interviewer: AG
LR

Interviewee: name _____

Gender (self complete) M F

Local Authority _____

Size of Authority: Metropolitan
District
County

Role: Member Party: Labour Lib/Dem Conservative
Officer
Job role _____

Introductions:

Hello, thank you for agreeing to take part in this research on behalf of the IDeA and DETR. Just to remind you, I am going to be asking you a few questions about the Beacon scheme in general, and more specifically about aspects of the Beacon events. Your comments will be put together with others to provide feedback to the IDeA and DETR on the events so far. I will be making notes as we go through. Your name will not be identified to assure confidentiality. The discussion should take about 20 minutes.

Questions:

1. It would be good to start off by finding out about your role with the LA, could you tell me briefly about this?

How long you have been in this role for? _____

2. I'd like to ask you about the Beacon scheme in general. What are your feelings about the scheme? (Probe differences re Members/Officers).
3. Has your authority made an application for Beacon status, or in the process of making an application? (Probe successful or not, expectations etc).

4. What are the key challenges do you think, for the scheme? (Probe as above).
5. Thinking more specifically now about Beacon events, have you seen any of the promotional materials for these events? (Probe views on these).
6. There will be a new round of events in the new year. Have any of you heard about these?
7. Some LA's have chosen to attend Beacon events, some have chosen not to, and others are undecided. What is your own authority's position on this?
8. If attended: Was it your own choice to attend? Can you tell me how it was decided who should attend?
9. Did you attend with other colleagues?
10. Are you thinking of attending any of these future events? (Probe reasons for 'yes' or 'no'. Probe values, expectations, motivations).
11. Are there any factors in particular discouraging you from attending? (Probe how these could be addressed).
12. The organisers are keen to encourage wider participation in these events. What do you think could be done to encourage people to take part?
13. What are your own feelings about the Beacon events? (Probe reasons). (Probe whether booked/cancelled/attended or not etc).
14. Have you heard any feedback from people who have attended any Beacon events? (Probe).
15. If you were in charge of designing the events, is there anything special you would do?
16. What would you do to attract more participants to the events?
17. What key message do you think the organisers of the events should take on board?
18. If you were in charge of the Beacon scheme as a whole, what do you think you would focus on changing, if anything?

Thank you for taking part. Your time and contribution is much appreciated.

FOCUS GROUP GUIDELINES

Introductions: (2 tape recorders to be used, 1 as back up)

AG and LR as co-facilitators with LGC. Reasons for inviting participants, opportunity to shape the next round of events and contribute to debate on the role of the Beacon scheme. Two groups being conducted. Confidentiality – no individuals identified, Chatham House rules. Use of tape. Time outline for the day. Round Robin names, something about self and role in their authority, and whether taking part in the Beacon scheme, submitting bids, and event attended (for attendees group). Why came today and what hope to get out of the day.

Focus Group A: Attendants of Beacon Events

- Thinking broadly about the Beacon scheme as a whole, we'd like to know about your views on the scheme.
- What are the key challenges, do you think, for the scheme?
- Thinking more specifically now about the Beacon events we'd like to find out about how you came to participate at a Beacon event. Was it your own choice to attend? (Probe process and extent of choice).
- What were the factors you thought about in terms of deciding whether to attend or not? (Probe barriers e.g. distance, work pressures, interest etc).
- Can you remember what your own hopes and expectations of the event were? (Probe choice of theme etc).
- Did you have expectations for the event in terms of your role at the authority?
- Did the event meet these hopes and expectations? (In what ways, did it exceed or disappoint expectations?)
- Were the events useful to you with respect to your job/role?
- What were the key strengths of the event/s that you attended?
- What were the key weaknesses of the event's that you attended?
- What did you tell your colleagues about it when you got home?
- Were you expected to give a debrief back at work? (Probe 'yes' or 'no').
- Who was involved in the debrief? (Probe range of role players).
- Were there any actions/discussion/outcomes as a result of this? (Probe).
- We'd like you to reflect for a moment on your own learning from the event – did you learn anything from the event, and if so, what do you feel you learned? (Probe reasons for learning or not learning and relation to expectations).
- If you were in charge of designing the events, is there anything special you would do?
- What would you do to attract more participants to the events?
- What key message do you think the organisers of the events should take on board?
- If you were in charge of the scheme as a whole, what do you think you would focus on changing, if anything?

Focus Group B: Non Attendants of Beacon Events

- We would like to kick off by asking you about the Beacon scheme in general. What are your feelings about the scheme? (Probe differences re Members/Officers).
- What are the key challenges, do you think, for the scheme? (Probe as above).
- Thinking more specifically now about Beacon events, have you seen any of the promotional materials for these events? (Probe views on these).
- There will be a new round of events in the new year. Have any of you heard about these?
- Some LAs have chosen to attend Beacon events, some have chosen not attend, and some are undecided. What are your feelings about attending a Beacon event? (Probe behaviours, e.g. bookings for which themes, attendance, cancellation).
- Are you thinking of attending any of these future events? (Probe reasons for 'yes' or 'no' related to personal/work role/expectations/values).
- Are there any factors in particular discouraging you from attending? (Probe how these could be addressed).
- The organisers are keen to encourage wider participation in these events. What do you think could be done to encourage people to take part?
- Have you heard any feedback from people who have attended any Beacon events? (Probe).
- If you were in charge of designing the events, is there anything special you would do?
- What would you do to attract more participants to the events?
- What key message do you think the organisers of the events should take on board?
- If you were in charge of the Beacon scheme as a whole, what do you think you would focus on changing, if anything?

Appendix 3
Beacon Council Themes 2000-2001

Community Safety:

Preventing local shopping and town centre crime and disorder

Education:

Helping to raise standards by tackling school failure

Housing:

Improving Housing Maintenance

Modernising Planning:

Streamlining the planning process for business

Modern Service Delivery:

Improving Housing and Council Tax Benefit Administration

Social services:

Helping Care Leavers

Sustainable Development:

Dealing with Waste

Appendix 4

Beacon Council Scheme: Initial Evaluation of Attendance at Events

Source: Improvement and Development Agency

Table 1 summarises the number of Beacon events that have run as part of the initial dissemination.

TABLE 1: Beacon Events

Theme	No. of Beacons in Theme	No. of Road Shows	No. of Open Days
Sustainable Development	7	2	8
Education	4	1	4
Modernising Planning	2	1	2
Housing	5	2	6
Modern Service Delivery	5	2	6
Community Safety	6	2	7
Social Services	4	2	3*

* One of the Open days was run jointly by two Beacons.

TABLE 2: Local Authorities Supporting the Beacon Events

No. of Local Authorities Supporting	Counties	Districts	London Bors	Metrop. Auth.	English UAs	Welsh
Road Shows	27	156	26	35	43	12
Housing Open-Days	0	29	4	19	12	0
Modern Service Delivery Open-Days	0	50	11	17	21	1
Planning Open-Days	0	17	0	7	4	0
Community Safety Open-Days	6	62	8	17	16	3
Sustainable Development Open-Days	15	71	18	16	22	4
Education Open-Days	15	0	10	7	12	3
Social Services Open-Days	10	0	9	4	10	1
<i>Not Engaged at all</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Total No. Of LAs</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>238</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>22</i>
% of LAs engaging in scheme after Road Shows	79.4	66.1	78.8	97.2	93.5	54.5
% of LAs engaging in scheme after Open Days	97	81.5	100	100	97.8	63.6

TABLE 3: Road Show Attendance

Theme (No. of Road Shows)	Total Attendance <i>incl. non-Eng. LAs</i>	Average Attendance per Event	Attendance: English LAs	
			Councillors	Officers
Housing Maintenance (2)	235	117.5	8	225
Modern Service Delivery (2)	236	118	8	217
Planning for Business (1)	168	168	10	158
Community Safety (2)	165	82.5	24	139
Waste Management (2)	307	153.5	64	249
Care Leavers (2)	156	78	8	139
Education (1)	84	84	8	73
Total	1352	112.7	130	1200

TABLE 4: Overall Attendance at Open Days

Theme	No. of Beacons in Theme	No. of Open Days	No. Fully Booked	Total Attendance	Average Attendance
Housing	5	6	4	357	59.5
Modern Service Delivery	5	6	3	352	58.7
Modernising Planning	2	2	1	55	27.5
Community Safety	6	7	2	210	30
Sustainable Development	7	8	3	494	61.75
Education	4	4	3	148	36.5
Social Services	4	3*	2	174	58
TOTAL		36	18	1790	

*One of the Open days was run jointly by two Beacons.

TABLE 5: Open Day Attendance by Type of Authority

Type	CC	DC	LB	Met	UA	Total
Housing Open-Days	0	103	17	112	79	311
Modern Service Delivery Open-Days	0	155	37	61	94	347
Planning Open-Days	0	33	0	10	9	52
Community Safety Open-Days	10	105	16	23	22	176
Sustainable Development Open-Days	69	209	48	46	54	426
Education Open-Days	53	0	38	15	39	145
Social Services Open-Days	36	0	19	9	15	79