Report of the Corporate Director, Development.

Update to April’s report entitled “How can we help our secondary schools improve the level of aspiration and attainment of their students?”

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update Members on developments since April’s report on the possible interventions that the Borough Council of Wellingborough could increase its involvement in increasing levels of attainment in our secondary schools and thus 'Improve life-chances for young people.'

2 Executive Summary

As a direct result of the consultations that took place during the writing of the last report, discussions have taken place regarding the opportunities for closer working between the Borough Council and the Wellingborough Education Partnership (WEP).

3 Proposed Action:

3.1 The Committee is invited to consider the proposal to discuss a more formal working relationship with the WEP and RECOMMEND that a report be taken to the Steering Group of the Wellingborough Partnership to detail the benefits that such a development could achieve.

4 Background

4.1 As part of the research undertaken for the last report into educational attainment in the Borough, the activities, aims and ambitions of the Wellingborough Education Partnership were investigated – particularly with regard to how the organisation could link with existing partnerships.

5 Discussion

5.1 The WEP’s action plan consists of key ‘strands’ of activity, which are set against the Every Child Matters framework.

5.2 Against each strand, certain outcomes have been identified. Outcomes 2 and 5 (as seen in Appendix 1), i.e. “Young people are ready for employment through achievement and attainment of required standards” and “Coordination of 14 – 18 and 19 – 30 education supports and builds on work achieved in the earlier educational age phases” are of particular relevance here.

5.3 The above sit under the ‘Achieving Economic Well-being’ outcome (Appendix 2) and have a direct correlation with the actions of Prosper Group (Appendix 3) of the Wellingborough Partnership and there is huge potential, willingness and opportunity for efforts and resources to be pooled in the pursuit of each group’s aims, which in themselves are closely linked.

5.4 The Prosper Group is looking to increase its business focus and linking with WEP to deliver some real results from an educational perspective would ‘free up’ Prosper to develop the business focus of the group.
5.5 Discussions are taking place between WEP and the key officers and Councillors involved in Prosper to look at the possibility of creating a more formal link between the two groups with a view to achieving higher aspiration and attainment across the Borough.

5.6 Any resulting suggestions / proposals would be brought back to the Wellingborough Partnerships Steering Group for further discussion before proceeding.

6 Legal Powers

6.1 The Local Government Act 2000 gives local authorities wide powers to promote well being. These powers permit local authorities “to do anything” which they consider is likely to promote or improve the economic, social, or/and environmental well being of their area, and they may be exercised for the benefit of the whole or part of a local authority’s area, or for people within it.

7 Financial and Value For Money Implications

7.1 No direct financial implications have been identified at this stage, but there may be a need for the re-prioritisation of Councillors / Officers workloads to realise some of the suggested interventions.

8 Risk Analysis

This table needs to be completed for any report setting out a proposed course of action that entails risks at the outset of the project or if the risks change along the way.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of risk</th>
<th>Consequences if realised</th>
<th>Likelihood of occurrence</th>
<th>Control measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key Stage 4 results continue to decline</td>
<td>Levels of attainment and aspiration could continue on a downward spiral</td>
<td>Medium – high on recent performance</td>
<td>Take a more active involvement in the activities of our local schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 Implications for Resources

9.1 There may be a need for the re-prioritisation of Councillors / Officers workloads to realise some of the suggested interventions.

10 Implications for Stronger and Safer Communities

10.1 LAA aspirations to maximise economic prosperity, raise skill levels in the working population and increase the number of people of working age engaged in high quality occupations.

11 Implications for Equalities

BME attainment has been specified as an area of weakness, which could be directly addressed by some of these recommendations, therefore reducing inequality

12 Author and Contact Officer

Economic Development Manager
13 **Consultees**

David Lindsley – WEP
Cllr Lora Lawman
Cllr J Bass

14 **Background Papers**

14.1 WEP Action Plans
14.2 Prosper Group Action Plan