



WELLINGBOROUGH PARTNERSHIP

the Local Strategic Partnership for Wellingborough

DRAFT – subject to approval at the next meeting

WELLINGBOROUGH PARTNERSHIP PROSPER GROUP
Tuesday, 14 October 2008

Present:

David Cross (Chair) Town Centre Partnership and
Wellingborough Chamber
Richard Armstrong Deputy Head, Wrenn School (substitute for
William Thallon)
Janet Dear Recruitment Adviser, Jobcentreplus
Nicola Dennis Economic Development Manager, BCW
Nick Duff Partnership Manager, Learning & Skills
Council
Pauline Henderson Northamptonshire Chamber (substitute for
Kirsty Storey)
Mick Judge Wellingborough Innovation Centre
Heather Payne Learning and Skills Manager,
Northamptonshire Enterprise Ltd
Abi Simms Project Co-ordinator, Business Link

Apologies:

Hugh Fenton Chairman, Wellingborough Partnership
Steering Group
Kate Kennedy Account Manager Jobcentre plus
Darren Mercieca Area Manager Northamptonshire Business
Link East Midlands
William Thallon Headteacher, Wrenn School

1. Welcomes / Introductions / Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Role and membership of the Prosper Group

DC explained the role of the Prosper Group and it was noted that the agreed actions for the Prosper group should reflect each partner organisations' actions to enable the targets to be measured effectively.

<p>The membership of the Prosper Group was agreed as above with the inclusion of Saeed Ghinai from Connexions and a representative from Tresham Institute. It was noted that a schools representative would be required as William Thallon would be chairing another group. Awaiting confirmation from HF as to who might represent Tresham / Wellingborough Education Partnership</p> <p>3. Discussion and agreement of the Group's actions</p> <p>DC tabled the proposed action plan template, which identified five outcomes for the Prosper Group and the previous action plan template.</p> <p>The proposed outcomes were discussed in detail.</p> <p>1. Improved Town Centre and measure its position on the Experian (Town Centres) register</p> <p>ND advised there was a need for co-ordinated action to promote the town centre through the Town Centre Area Action Plan in order to maximise any opportunities to influence/support the regeneration of the town. It was noted that the Council and the Town Centre Partnership had produced a brochure known as 'Why Wellingborough'. The aim was that the brochure would be placed on the Council website and sent to industries and commercial agents in order to promote Wellingborough.</p> <p>MJ suggested that the brochure page should also link to Northamptonshire Enterprise Limited. It was noted that page or reciprocal links would enable Google ratings to increase. DC tabled a hard copy of the brochure.</p> <p>It was noted that the Wellingborough Chamber of Commerce had organised a 'Business to Business showcase' event on 4 November 2008, which enabled local companies to exhibit what they did and make everyone aware. ND advised that the Council would be having a stand and to contact her if any organisation wished their details exhibiting. It was agreed that ND would check whether Business Link and any educational providers, e.g. Tresham would be present.</p> <p>DC referred to an Employment and Skills event to be held in March at the Castle; it was noted that NDuff was aiming to get as many of the local existing providers at the education event.</p>	<p>ND</p>
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<p>ND requested that she be informed of any other events that might help in terms of promotion of the town centre as well as the wider borough in order to increase the visitors to the borough.</p> <p>PH advised that an effective train service from Wellingborough station, the Wellingborough public school and free parking should be considered as huge attractions for Wellingborough.</p> <p>ND advised that the Council and NNDC were working on a Place Marketing project to enable districts to promote themselves and also to promote North Northamptonshire as a whole; Wellingborough was described as providing easy connectivity and productivity to London.</p> <p>ND advised that she was aiming to creating a newsletter front page on the Council website in the New Year, which would link to an email directory for all businesses of the Borough and any business initiatives could be placed on the website with a link to the partners' website, which provided more information. It was noted that a Prosper Group section would also appear on the website. It was agreed that this would be a very useful tool.</p> <p>It was agreed that ND, DC and MJ would be listed as the partners involved in this outcome. NDuff to be listed as the contact for the event in March. ND agreed to provide a link to the TCAAP to enable partners to feed into the consultation.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>ND/DC/MJ</p> <p>NDuff ND</p>
<p>2. Increase in number of people employed in occupations requiring higher technological and educational skills.</p> <p>ND advised there was a need to promote Wellingborough as a location for business and to develop the workforce, through promotions such as the Train to Gain.</p> <p>It was noted there needed to be a transformational plan to encourage higher educational people to return to the county following their studies.</p> <p>HP advised that the SQW Study was looking into a demand survey which would feed into the bid for a higher education centre for the north - Wellingborough, Kettering, East Northants and Corby.</p>	

<p>HP advised that organisations were being asked to sign up to the Skills Pledge, which aimed to train their employees to Level 2 (5 GCSEs A-C to include Maths and English or Numeracy and Literacy). It was noted that Corby Borough Council had signed up for the Skills Pledge.</p> <p>HP agreed to speak to James Cushing and Jez Goodman so that Skills Pledge could be discussed in more detail at the next meeting and how it fitted into the EMDA single pot.</p> <p>HP suggested that Marilyn Saddington be contacted, who would be able to advise organisations on how to implement the Skills pledge; ways of resourcing and developing workshops and linking to programmes and actions.</p> <p>MJ suggested there needed to be a benchmark figure showing the skills level for Wellingborough; ND referred to the NOMIS figures.</p> <p>HP agreed to work with James and Jez and would review the SNEAP delivery plan for levels 3 and 4 and establish who was responsible for them.</p> <p>PH advised she would be attending the Northamptonshire Chamber of Commerce Policy Summit at the Royal Opera House.</p> <p>Agreed the Skills Pledge should be a target. A suggestion was made that the target be that 50% of businesses signed up to the pledge by 2011.</p> <p>HP encouraged Wellingborough Council to sign up to the Skills Pledge using the brokers to support the process.</p> <p><i>(Note from Marilyn Saddington – “We have 12 organisations with Head Offices based in and around Wellingborough signed up to the Skills Pledge listed currently. There may be some more that have signed up online without the assistance of the Skills Brokerage Service but I wouldn't think that it would be significantly higher in total. This is out of a total of 85 businesses who have signed up in the county. I would expect this figure to start to rise quite significantly between now and the end of March as we are focusing on improving the numbers signed up”.</i></p>	<p>HP</p> <p>HP</p>
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3. Increase average earnings of employees

ND suggested there was a need to co-ordinate actions to promote higher level workforce development and also promote further education within schools to raise ambitious and aspirations.

RA advised that over 60% of the pupils in Wrenn School went into 6th form. It was noted that Wrenn were introducing 3 diplomas with potentially another two, which would increase the vocational aspiration of the pupils.

MJ advised that he had worked with the schools through the Young Enterprise programme and noted young children were growing up in communities where families were not in current employment and that was perceived to be the norm.

It was noted that ND was working on an incentive called a 'World of Work Day', which consisted of a morning session where employers (e.g. Food and Drink, Construction industry, financial services, environmental services, call and service centres) talked about the work they did. The afternoon session consisted of a jobs and training fair for the adults in an attempt to raise their own aspirations. It was noted that an interview process together with a feedback session would also be beneficial.

RA advised that the Wellingborough Education Partnership had held a similar event, known as 'Enrichment Day'.

RA advised that Kirsty Morris, Science co-ordinator at Wrenn could work with the businesses to build the links with the schools and develop learning opportunity.

4. Increase number of working age population qualified to at least level 4 (degree) or higher

It was noted there was a Breakfast/luncheon meeting on 4 November 2008 to promote 'Train to Gain'.

DC advised he would arrange for an employer to attend the next meeting to gain their views on how to promote workforce development.

ND suggested that employers and employees should be offered a complete package to include 'Promote Business to Business' showcase; Work Trails, New Deal (18-24 year olds) and any other initiatives.

<p>RA advised that Wrenn School was Investors in People school and it was a high financial outlay to maintain that standard; any financial assistance would be useful.</p> <p>NDuff advised that he only had access to East Midlands and County statistics but not down to Wellingborough.</p> <p>Suggested actions:- Promote the importance of education. Apprenticeships.</p> <p>5. Reduction in the number of people of working age without formal qualifications.</p> <p>ND suggested an action that the Young Enterprise programmes be rolled out to all schools in an attempt to reduce the NEET numbers.</p> <p>AS referred to the 'Off the Street' initiative for 18-25 year olds, which offered a grant of up to £2,000 and work training and it was noted that 5 groups were looking to sign up to business.</p> <p>It was noted that Pathway to Business was being funded by NEL.</p> <p>Action It was agreed that ND would amend the Prosper Group action plan with the points raised during the meeting, which would then be emailed to the Group for their input as to how the actions could be quantified and measured.</p> <p>4. Any other business</p> <p>None.</p> <p>5. Date of next meeting</p> <p>10 December 2008 @ 2.00pm</p> <p>MJ suggested that the timing of future meetings should be reviewed to enable schools to attend. It was agreed this would be raised at the next meeting.</p>	<p>ND</p> <p>ALL</p>
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