

JOINT MEMBER-LED REVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN FENLAND

To: **Cabinet**

Date: **14 December 2010**

From: **Reece Bowman, Scrutiny and Improvement Officer**

Electoral division(s): **All in Fenland**

Forward Plan ref: **Not applicable** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To present the report and recommendations of the joint Fenland District Council / Cambridgeshire County Council Scrutiny Review of Educational Attainment in Fenland.**

Recommendation: **Cabinet is asked to:**

- **Consider the recommendations of the review group for implementation (see page 10).**
- **Where recommendations are accepted: include the agreed recommendations in the relevant services' Service Plans.**

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the 28th April 2010 meeting of the Children and Young People (CYP) Scrutiny Committee the terms of reference for a review of educational attainment in Fenland were approved. The review was to be undertaken jointly with Fenland District Council's (FDC) Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel.
- 1.2 Three members of the CYP Scrutiny Committee were appointed to sit alongside three FDC Scrutiny members. The review group – chaired by Fenland District Councillor David Wheeler, vice-chaired by Cllr. Peter Downes - duly met and gathered evidence on the subject.
- 1.3 On 2nd December 2010 the review group's report and recommendations were considered by the CYP Scrutiny Committee and were formally accepted for submission to Cabinet. The report is attached below.
- 1.4 The report is also proceeding through FDC democratic processes:
 - 9th December 2010 - FDC's Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel meets to approve the report and recommendations for submission to FDC Cabinet
 - 16th December 2010 - FDC Cabinet meets to consider the report and recommendations for implementation

2. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

Resources and Performance

- 2.1 None

Statutory Requirements and Partnership Working

- 2.2 None

Climate Change

- 2.3 None

Access and Inclusion

- 2.4 None

Engagement and Consultation

- 2.5 None

**Children and Young People
Scrutiny Committee**

**Fenland District Council
Overview and Scrutiny
Performance Panel**

Educational Attainment in Fenland

Joint Member-led Review

Educational Attainment in Fenland

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – An Improving Picture, however challenges remain

Fenland, historically, has had low levels of educational attainment and skills. Elected members from both Fenland District Council (FDC) and Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) decided to undertake a joint review in order to investigate this issue¹ and formulate recommendations to assist in making further improvements in Fenland.

The review has demonstrated that the causes are complex, yet performance is improving. Levels of attainment are climbing, particularly at secondary school level; in Whittlesey for example, secondary results are already above the County and National average. More broadly, the gap between Fenland attainment levels and County or National averages is, in some cases, reducing. The overall improvement is a result of the hard work that schools and partners have contributed both to, education directly and the wider work to develop provision for children and families in the district.

Fenland is becoming a more aspirational place and a key message from the review is the need to recognise this success and build on it as we move forward. However, there remain substantial challenges and these are as much to do with the wider determinants of education as to do with specific school performance. In particular, the need to raise the aspirations of parents and the community arose repeatedly. Increasing parental engagement and confidence to support their children's educational needs has to be a key aim for all partners.

For a child in Fenland, particular factors, less prevalent elsewhere in the county, that affect their future attainment are already present at the beginning of their life. Children living in different parts of the district experience different life chances, as do children with specific backgrounds/experiences. The educational impact of these differences increases as children grow up, so tackling them at the earliest stage possible is critical to improving attainment and ensuring all children have the same opportunities. As a child grows up, transitions into education and then between different stages are critical. Excellent work to improve these transitions is already underway, but partners need to continue to develop this further. We also need to ensure that children have a broad life experience not limited by their background.

The good work of addressing attainment as early as possible will be undone if we do not get transitions to post 16 provision and transitions to Higher and Further Education and into employment right. There is scope for strengthening partnership working between schools, the Councils and businesses to tackle the level of those "Not in Education Employment and Training" and improve the offer, particularly of apprenticeships.

Building on the improvement in Fenland can only be achieved by continuing to deepen and improve partnership working. Most of the issues identified in which a significant difference can be made require a collaborative approach between partner agencies, if they are to be successfully addressed. There is already significant partnership work being undertaken, with good outcomes, and partners should develop this. Together we can ensure Fenland becomes a place where learning is more valued, children attain more and enjoy greater life chances.

FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS

The key findings of the group follow the life of a child in Fenland through the stages of their educational life. Cross cutting themes that affect all stages are then drawn out.

¹ See Appendix 'Other' for FDC and CCC joint Educational attainment review Terms of Reference

1.0 The life of a child

1A Pre-birth and Early Years

1. Pre birth and early years focuses on the child up to age 5. A child within this stage will learn and develop within a number of settings, for example in the home, nursery, children's centre or in school. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) assessment at the end of children's first year at school is the first comprehensive assessment of likely attainment. At this stage, children's attainment is evaluated and issues identified through teacher assessments.
2. The quality of early year's provision is vital and can be verified through the EYFS Ofsted outcomes for settings in Fenland for 2009/2010. The outcomes are comparable with and exceed Cambridgeshire outcomes, with 20% of Ofsted inspections of provision/settings rated as outstanding compared to a Cambridgeshire average of 15%. However, out of the 33 early years specialists with professional status in the County, only 2 work in Fenland.
3. There is a stronger picture from the EYFS profile in 2009 in Fenland compared to Cambridgeshire as a whole. Early indications suggest further improvements in 2010:
 - The gap between Cambridgeshire and Fenland has narrowed with further work needed to continue this improvement.
 - The attainment gap in Fenland is now in line with the national figure.
4. In 2009, children living in the Wisbech area achieved an improvement in the areas of Personal Social Education and Communication, Language and Literacy. However, children in March and Chatteris demonstrated a decline in these areas. This is partly attributed to the transition of pupils in these localities. Targeted work is being done to tackle this issue, including training 18 practitioners to become early years professionals.
5. Children in Fenland are benefitting from the Every Child a Talker, Communication, Language and Literacy Development and Extra Mile programmes. A good way to improve and build on the existing success of these programmes is to extend them throughout the district and continue sharing learning between organisations.
6. The Healthy Child Programme (HCP) is an early intervention and preventative public health programme that lies at the heart of the universal service for children and families. It provides an invaluable opportunity to identify families at the earliest stage that are in need of additional support and children who are at risk of not succeeding. This work needs to be promoted and continued. The linkage of this programme to the development of Sure Start children's centres in Fenland has provided a real opportunity to make more of a difference to the children and families in the district. The impact is across a wider set of outcomes (as highlighted above) than we have been able to impact upon previously.
7. Children's Centres play a fundamental role in the early years of a child's life, although, at its best, work is not focussed solely on the child. For example, entire families are drawn into the Ormiston managed Children's Centre in March (visited by group members) which includes services such as midwifery and adult education courses. These courses can raise the aspirations of parents and improve their employability. This, in turn, can play a part in raising parents' aspirations for their children.

8. The Centre is a high performing establishment,² and is one of two Children's Centres in the county run by voluntary sector organisations. The accommodation of two Midwife teams at the Centre means that parents are introduced to the services provided at the Centre before their child is born, as they access antenatal services. The relationship forged at this early stage then has the potential to develop as the child grows, with Centre services available to support the parents as they are required.
9. Links with local pre-schools and primaries are well developed, and child transition between settings is well managed. Many of the Fenland head teachers (both primary and secondary) that met with the group³ supported this suggesting that, across the district more generally, intelligence relating to specific children's circumstances needs to be relayed successfully at all transitions between educational phases. This is particularly true of children who have not been engaged in pre-school and means that better engagement of health visitors with Children's Centres and school's is even more critical
10. The challenge of engaging fathers is being confronted, with a relatively high proportion of fathers accessing the services and support available at the Centre. Outreach work also appears impressive in targeting those that may be in greater need of the services on offer.
11. Early identification of families with children likely to need additional support is essential. Sympathetic intervention in the earliest years of a child's life can significantly enhance performance and reduce the cost of providing support later in life. Therefore, the group endorses the need to maintain and develop provision at the Early Years phase.

1B Primary education

12. Primary education focuses on a child aged between 5-11 years old. This age group is split into key stage 1 (KS1) with children aged 5-7 and key stage 2 (KS2) with children aged 7-11. A child will generally progress through these stages within a school context. Attainment is assessed at KS1 through teacher assessments and through national set tests at KS2.
13. As a child in KS1 in Fenland you are likely to be meeting the level 2 (L2) average threshold set nationally, although you have a lower chance of doing this than a child elsewhere in the county. However, it should be highlighted that there are some real areas of improvement within Fenland. For example, in Wisbech the proportion of pupils achieving L2+ in reading, writing and mathematics have all increased. In Whittlesey the proportion of pupils achieving L2+ in reading and mathematics has also increased. Girls in KS1 in Fenland will generally outperform boys, with the gender gap widest in writing and narrowest in maths.
14. Improvements in Wisbech and Whittlesey have been offset by lower rates of performance in March and Chatteris, which have seen a slight reduction in reading attainment and a greater reduction in writing and mathematics attainment.
15. As a child in KS2 in Fenland you are likely to be meeting the Level 4 average threshold set nationally although you have a lower chance of doing this than a child elsewhere in the County. However, there have been some areas of real improvement. The proportion of pupils achieving L4+ in maths and English has risen with around a quarter of pupils attaining the higher standard of L5 and attainment to L5 in science has also risen. Girls in KS2 in Fenland will, on average, perform better than boys and the gender gap is widest in English, but narrowest in maths and science.

² Measures of performance include: Loan parent families supported; Fathers supported; teenaged parents supported, etc.

³ Over twenty primary and secondary school head teachers met with group members at Thomas Clarkson Community College on 18th October 2010.

16. Fenland has a higher proportion of children identified as being at School Action and School Action Plus compared to a county average. However, the level of statements in Fenland schools remains in line with the county at 2%. The review highlighted this as an important but specialist area that required further consideration and it has therefore been identified by the group as an area that needs further work.

1C Secondary education

17. Secondary education focuses on a child aged between 11-16 years old. This review has focussed on the attainment of pupils in key stage 4 (KS4), aged 15-16 years old. A child will generally progress through this stage within a school setting. Secondary attainment is assessed through national examinations with key indicators including the percentage gaining 5 A*-C, and 5+ A*-C including English and mathematics.
18. In Fenland the overall picture is one of significant improvement, particularly in the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C and 5+ A*-C in GCSEs, including English and mathematics. There has been a marginal improvement in the percentage achieving any GCSE/equivalent pass (1+ A*-G) and this needs to continue to be a focus for improvement.
19. Although performance over the last 3 years has improved significantly in Fenland secondary schools, performance is mixed. In Whittlesey in 2010 GCSE results were above the Cambridgeshire and national average, however the remaining market towns of March, Chatteris and Wisbech were all below the Cambridgeshire average. The extent of challenge secondary schools face is affected by the level of attainment of pupils prior to secondary education and this varies across the district.
20. In some areas, e.g. the performance of Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and children with a home language other than English, the rate of improvement in Fenland is greater than the rate of improvement for these groups across the county. However, overall attainment remains below the Cambridgeshire and national average.
21. Boys in Fenland at KS4 have narrowed the gap against girls' performance. However, the 'gender gap' in Fenland is wider than the average gender gap in Cambridgeshire as a whole and nationally. It remains a real issue, particularly in the percentages achieving 5+ A*-C including English and mathematics.
22. There is a need to ensure that a range of advice and guidance is offered to young people, including vocational qualifications and apprenticeships, as well as GCSE attainment to ensure all are supported with future life chances. The group has also found that there is a need to capitalise on the range of assets available throughout the district that young people can use to improve life chances and attainment.
23. Support for the transition to secondary education is particularly important. Going from a smaller and familiar primary setting to a larger, more diverse, secondary is a key moment in a child's life. The hard work already underway to support transition to this phase should be built upon, with the Common Assessment Framework utilised where appropriate.

1D Post 16

24. Currently within Fenland there are five providers of further education. These include Sir Harry Smith, Neale Wade and Cromwell Community Colleges, which work in partnership. Thomas Clarkson's sixth form provision is delivered in partnership with the College of West Anglia (CoWA) that provides a wide range of further education. However, many students

choose to travel outside of Fenland to pursue post-16 education. The reasons for this are varied but it is important we ensure that it is not due to them being unable to follow their chosen course at a local 6th Form or Further Education College in the district.

25. At post 16, girls in Fenland outperform boys, however compared with other districts in Cambridgeshire. However, overall attainment highlights Fenland ranks 5th out of 5 districts and compared with similar places, Fenland ranks 6th out of 6 locations. A large array of work is being undertaken by many stakeholders across Fenland to improve post 16 attainment and provision. CoWA has improved the range of options available to students and as a result the level of attainment has increased from 60% in 2006 to 78% in 2010. This wide ranging offer needs to be continued and enhanced to sustain and improve attainment.
26. The transition to post 16 is perhaps the most complex given the range of options available. To ensure information, advice and guidance is effectively provided and targeted is a key challenge. This has been supplemented through targeted projects with vulnerable groups.

2.0 Cross-cutting themes

27. An overarching finding has been that educational attainment is affected by a multitude of factors, impacting the lives of children, their families and communities at large. Given the range of factors involved, the review group endorses the idea that the improvement of educational attainment is a multi-agency concern, with parental and broader community engagement an essential component.
28. There are a number of underperforming groups that are present at all the key stages of a child's life. These groups include boys, summer-born, those eligible for FSM, children of Gypsy/Roma heritage, children from Eastern European families, children with an identified SEN and children living in Wisbech localities. Work to provide targeted support to these groups needs to be continued and where appropriate strengthened within schools. In developing wider programmes, consideration needs to be given to how they will help narrow the gap for these particular groups..
29. Fenland faces challenges, but a picture of the district has emerged which clearly indicates many marketable features that could positively influence educational attainment. These include:
- Its inclusion in an emerging 'Green Triangle' of renewable energy technology, which provides excellent opportunities for future economic growth and enterprise.
 - Leading engineering firms and facilities for the teaching of engineering
 - Close proximity to Peterborough and Cambridge, although transport links are a difficulty.
30. Maximising and interlinking these and other attributes of the district are key challenges facing the district, county council and their partners. The Greater Cambridge – Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) could provide an ideal vehicle to engage wider stakeholders in this project.
31. Schools are the major partners in this effort, and every attempt should be made to continue to support them in their work. Recent improvements are significant and to be applauded. However in a period of shrinking resources, closer work through clusters will be essential to sustain initiatives that drive improvement.
32. Recruitment and retention across the public sector, in particular teachers and health visitors is a current issue in the district. This issue was heard a number of times throughout the review and the ongoing work to tackle this concern needs to be supported.

33. While the review followed the life of a child some themes occurred at each stage. These were often the principal issues to be addressed and importantly where positive change could be achieved by public and voluntary agencies. They include:
- Parental engagement
 - Increasing aspiration
 - English as an Additional Language (EAL) and migration issues
 - Health and well-being
 - Transport

2A Parental engagement

34. Local stakeholders described to the review an inter-generational culture of detachment from education in some groups. Positive parental engagement can help develop a 'virtuous circle': greater involvement brings greater success for children, fewer behaviour issues, happier family life.
35. The inclusion of midwifery services in Early Years settings could be a key means to achieving this. As mentioned, the March Children's Centre has incorporated these services into its offer to existing and prospective parents. This joining-up of pre and post-birth provision gives a vital opportunity to get to know parents, engaging them from the early stages of pregnancy through birth and beyond.
36. The potential to develop such crucial early linkages with parents should be further exploited in Children's Centres county-wide, as should moves to strengthen linkages with NHS services, libraries and schools. Sure Start Health Visitors are an exciting development in this regard, that could lead to seamless provision in Children's Centres from a child's conception through to age 5. However, concerns over maintaining linkages between Children's Centre-based Health Visitors and GP surgeries need to be addressed.
37. Building Schools for the Future will deliver enhancements that will support pupils learning and enable greater community engagement. Promoting these improvements will help to improve children's perceptions of learning and parental attitudes.
38. At all stages of a child's education, positive marketing of Fenland and its schools could play a vital role in developing confidence amongst Fenland's parents. Allowing Fenland parents to see how schools and partners are maximising this and other positives in relation to the district will play a part in increasing engagement with Fenland schools. It will highlight to parents the employment possibilities on their doorstep and so encourage them to engage and support their children's attainment.
39. Success stories can play a role in altering perceptions, bolstering confidence and particularly stemming the loss of children at the secondary and post 16 stages. The local media play a key role in this regard, and should be encouraged to see themselves as part of the solution, where appropriate.
40. Fenland's advantage is its immediate proximity to the greater Cambridge area and the centre of educational excellence that is Cambridge. Encouraging aspiration through enabling access to the Universities and high technology enterprises is important.
41. The same point is applicable to Fenland based enterprises: young people should be given every opportunity to hear from Fenland business leaders, to have worthwhile placements within their companies and be galvanised by their successes. Fenland has a good level of

entrepreneurial activity and continuing the work on encouraging enterprise in schools will better skill the young people of Fenland to start and more importantly grow businesses.

2B Increasing aspiration

42. The traditional Fenland pattern of low-skill, local work is changing. The attraction of economic growth and enterprise into and surrounding the District opens up better opportunities for local young people provided they have both the educational qualifications and personal skills to benefit from them.
43. Perceptions of the District play a large part in the levels of aspiration amongst its residents. Other factors, too, play a role, including levels of parental education and aspiration, exposure to reading and books, general health and well-being and structure and emotional stability. These factors taken in sum represent a significant challenge to agencies attempting to raise levels of aspiration.
44. The positive marketing and improved perception of the District are perhaps those best affected by statutory agencies. During evidence gathering, the group heard that promoting Fenland would simultaneously address recruitment and retention issues, and levels of aspiration. Fenland's unique selling points, such as its panoramic views and proximity to Cambridge and Peterborough should be emphasised and strengthened through plans and strategies developed for the area from town/parish level and above.
45. Tuition in and the commercial presence of engineering are key strengths of the District. Engineering has proved a great success story of the FE provision in Fenland. This has been encouraged by the Stainless Metal Craft centre which offers students a link into business and a chance to experience the 'real world' of work. Such stories should be promoted and used to sell Fenland and the opportunity it offers both people and business.
46. Barriers to aspiration and attainment in Fenland include very practical considerations around further education courses and access. The number of apprenticeships available is currently low and causes problems for student progression. As a consequence, work is being done to encourage the range and number of apprenticeships available in Fenland. For example, College of West Anglia (CoWA) apprenticeships have grown over the last 4 years from 600 to 900 (in various fields such as engineering, business administration and hairdressing). CoWA intends to increase these numbers further; however this can be assisted by the public sector supporting businesses to develop apprenticeships and to review their own provision.
47. Retaining and improving the quality of Further Education facilities in Fenland is critical if the aspirations for apprenticeships and other pathways are to be delivered. Current proposals being considered to develop a new engineering block are essential not only to fill a clearly identified training need, and build on the strength of an existing successful business sector but also to maintain the wider FE offer in Fenland.
48. Alongside apprenticeships are a number of Diploma courses that are available to students in Fenland. The Diploma qualification offers 14 to 19 year olds practical, hands-on experience as well as classroom learning. Currently 19% of 14-19 year old students in Fenland are undertaking a Diploma, with a target of 25% set, and a commitment to increase this offer further. Increasing pathways for student progression are welcomed, and efforts to encourage gender atypical Diploma selection are encouraged.
49. Work experience placements have also been shown to be a very effective way of engaging young people in education and raising their aspirations. However the range and quality

needs improving. A success story involved work placements with Roddons Housing Association, which has led to two young people attaining full time apprenticeship. This approach should be replicated (where possible) to include further businesses/organisations operating in a wider variety of sectors.

50. It is hoped that greater choice at 16 will positively impact on numbers of Fenland young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). In the District, from August 2009 to August 2010, the proportion of people who are NEET declined and fell below the England and Eastern region average. However Fenland does consistently have a higher level of young people NEET compared with the other Cambridgeshire districts.
51. Work in Fenland to address levels of NEET includes a number of projects, some of which are highlighted below. Work to sustain and build on this foundation is essential.
- Prevention work in schools through alternative curriculum and support
 - Early identification of young people at risk with intervention through CCC locality teams
 - Teens and Toddlers programme in Wisbech and Children's Centre outreach work and targeted support especially for teenage mothers
 - Joint programmes such as the Fenland District Council and Wisbech Locality Team NEET project 'Can Do Communities'
 - Anglia Ruskin University NEET research project
52. Transition between different stages of education is often where students have most difficulty and aspiration/attainment is affected. Throughout KS 1-4 students receive concentrated teaching support, which is reduced upon entry to further education. To address this in Fenland, CoWA run Level 1 programmes so students can go into college and learn without previous qualifications and receive greater support. It can be reasonably assumed that without Level 1 programmes in Fenland, levels of NEET would be higher.

2C English as an Additional Language (EAL) and migration issues

53. Fenland has seen significant migration from Portugal and more recently from Eastern Europe and includes a growing number of Roma families. This has impacted on the pupil intake of a number of Fenland schools, particularly in certain parts of Wisbech. Out of the EAL learners in Fenland a significant percentage of them have arrived in school in the last two years and are usually relatively new to English.
54. It should be noted that there is no evidence that an increase in Eastern European migration and EAL learners have a negative impact on the overall standards and effectiveness of a school. However, where new arrivals are being admitted into Key Stage 4, schools may experience additional pressure to meet pupils' needs and deliver the curriculum.
55. Primary county attainment data from 2009 and 2010 indicate that children with an Eastern European home language attain significantly less well at KS1 and 2 in reading, writing, and Mathematics than the county average and less well than children with a home language other than English that is not Eastern European. Secondary county attainment data indicates that children at KS4 with a home language other than English are improving significantly with more children achieving 5+ A*-C including English and mathematics than previously but overall attainment remains well below the county average. However this is not the case for 1+ A*-G as this has declined for children with a home language other than English.
56. There is no single explanation for this pattern. One of the factors which impacts on achievement may be limited or no previous schooling as children start school at six/seven

in Eastern Europe. A number of the children and young people of migrant families in Fenland schools come from socio-economically deprived backgrounds and therefore face multiple barriers to achievement. For example, parents work long, unsociable hours, family literacy skills are generally low, and families often live in overcrowded accommodation. It is worth noting that children who are fluent and literate in their first language are better placed to develop their English than those who have more limited ability in their first language.

57. Great work is being undertaken by some Fenland primary and secondary schools to respond to the needs of EAL learners. Two schools have identified leading teachers of EAL, schools have taken up offers of training in EAL pedagogy and some schools have created the role of EAL coordinator. In addition, school staff and governors have undertaken training in community cohesion and in responding effectively to racist incidents. The Fenland Junction Pupil Referral Unit also provided its students with a series of workshops on anti racism in Spring and Summer of 2010.
58. Gypsy and Traveller secondary transfer and retention in Fenland present a generally more positive picture than in other parts of the county. Nevertheless, the educational needs of English Gypsies and Travellers of Irish heritage, who, according to 2010 annual school census figures, constitute 1.2% of the total school population in Fenland, need addressing. They are the lowest attaining groups across all key stages and their achievement is affected by issues of mobility, poor attendance and community tensions.

2D Health and well-being

59. The panel received a summary of Fenland Health related survey. Overall Fenland has a lower than Cambridgeshire average 'locus of health score'. This score measures confidence levels and the ability to positively control and manage one's own health. This means Fenland secondary school pupils have lower confidence and find it more difficult to control and manage their own health and well-being. These behaviours have a direct impact on educational attainment and a strong correlation with risk behaviours.
60. The survey highlighted some positive behaviour of secondary school age pupils in Fenland. Fenland pupils consume more fruit and vegetables than the Cambridgeshire average, boys in Fenland are consistent with the county average for physical exercise and activity outside school (girls are below) and young people are significantly more aware of sex and relationship advice and support. However, Fenland is performing worse in a number of measures compared to the county; these include smoking, drinking, sexual activity and incidents of bullying.
61. A range of initiatives and projects are being run in partnership with key organisations, including FDC, CCC and the NHS in order to tackle Fenland's underlying health issues. Initiatives include the Kick Ash project that will be run in partnership with Sir Harry Smith to raise awareness about smoking. However success will require initiatives that address these issues in a joined up and comprehensive way. Better engagement with health particularly GPs was a consistent theme through all stages of the review.

2E Transport

62. Access is an issue that affects children and young people of all ages whether preventing the running of after school clubs, access to further education opportunities or social activities. The use of community transport is being piloted as a way of allowing Fenland young people access to the opportunities within the district that, due to issues with public transport, would not otherwise be available to them. This could be expanded. However it does not detract from the need to sustain and enhance public transport.

3.0 EDUCATION REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CCC and FDC to work in partnership with schools and other providers to raise aspirations in Fenland through:
 - Communicating successes and opportunities.
 - Developing parental engagement with schools and education in all its forms particularly those from migrant communities.
 - Developing parental skills in supporting children's education.
 - Targeting work to ensure children in Fenland have access to a broad range of cultural and sporting opportunities.
 - Targeted work to address young people's confidence about controlling their own health and well-being
2. CCC and its partners to widen the availability of provision at the Early Years Foundation Stage, taking advantage of proposals for additional provision for 2 year olds and ensuring it is targeted at those most in need.
3. Health engagement needs to be improved and best practice implemented consistently across the district. In particular work to:
 - Identify, assess and refer children with developmental needs at the earliest stage.
 - Ensure effective engagement of key stakeholders including GP's, health visitors, children centres and schools.
 - Address the outcomes of the Health Related Survey for Fenland
4. Continue to strengthen the work of schools and Councils in "cluster groups" including continuing to focus on the development of transition projects/services.
5. To support the joint project led by FDC and CCC to address recruitment and retention of public sector staff particularly teachers, health visitors and social workers.
6. FDC and CCC to support stronger links between business and schools at all curriculum levels and in particular to:
 - Improve the quality of work experience placements
 - Support the growth of apprenticeships
7. FDC and CCC to pilot the extension of community transport initiatives to support the provision of after school activities, particularly in rural villages.
8. It is essential that resources continue to be targeted to reduce the educational attainment gap across Cambridgeshire. In addressing the reduction of resources, CCC and FDC should ensure that the potential of community assets are maximised and that duplication is avoided.

Further work identified

1. Further work needs to be undertaken to understand the reasons for high levels of Schools Action and Schools Action plus in Fenland.
2. The conclusions of this review need to be tested through appropriate engagement with children, young people and families.