

Leicestershire & Rutland Improvement Partnership



April 2007

Issue 4

Senior Women's Network becomes the Women Managers Network

The LRIP Senior Women's Network (SWN), launched at the end of 2006 has been renamed as the Women Managers Network.

The Women Manager's Network was developed to build on the experience and 'beacon' of the six women chief executives in Leicestershire and Rutland whilst acknowledging the lower levels of women in senior posts in the work force. In setting up the WMN an opportunity is offered to support women achieve and meet their specific needs. The Women Managers Network offers a unique opportunity and will provide Role Models, mentoring and energy to research and provide the support managers need to develop.

Each Council will have a Champion and a Facilitator who is responsible for supporting the WMN and publishing any relevant information.

At the launch keynote speeches were given by Lucy de Groot Executive Director of IDeA who have supported the Network; and Norma Jarboe of Opportunity Now.

Lucy de Groot discussed the role of women in the general public sector and local government in particular. She said: 'Women can and should become leaders. A leader must manage not just tasks but also relationships since they achieve primarily through the efforts of others. Being a successful leader is more than just having the right technical skills and intelligence; they must be able to tune into the value, behaviours and emotions that enable them to effectively manage themselves and others'.

Norma Jarboe of



Opportunity Now gave an overview on what makes a successful and sustainable network, particularly focusing on the needs of women.

Caron Cant Knowledge Projects Manager IDeA gave a talk on Knowledge Management and Communities of Practice – A Taste of the Future. Caron gave a greater understanding of Knowledge Management; the benefits; what it means and an introduction to the communities of practice.

The launch included a 'Question Time' with the six women chief executives. Questions asked by the audience covered the experiences needed to progress in an organisation, tips on learning and taking opportunity and who were the role models who inspired the group.

Lynn Aisbett, Chief Executive Melton Borough Council and the Lead Chief Executive for the Network said: 'The Network is about promoting opportunity, giving time to learn from each other and to create an environment which is responsive to the needs of women in the workplace'.



Middle Manager Development Programme – ready for take off!

Having finalised the specification for the middle management development programme, Aspire @ Loughborough College became the preferred provider to work in partnership with the management development strand and jobsgopublic.

Aspire are the business solutions aspect of Loughborough College of Further Education with Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) centre of excellence status since 2002 and have expertise of working in both the private and public sector.

Beginning on 27th February 2007 Aspire will provide a 10 day nationally accredited management development programme at ILM level 5. The 10 one day modules will be delivered, at a variety of local authority venues in the county, over a period of 8 months and will include the following content:

- Induction Module and Action Learning
- Planning Change
- Strategic Thinking and Planning
- Community and Partnerships
- The Art of being Brilliant
- Implementing Change
- Transformational Leadership
- Communications and Work Based Assignment support
- Delivering the Difference and Embedding Excellence
- Performance Management

There will be 18 middle managers beginning the pilot programme in February, made up of 2-3 middle managers from each of the 8 partner district authorities.

The strand recognises the importance of ensuring that the middle managers feel supported throughout the development programme in order to embed the learning. Besides the learning activities required to fulfil the accreditation requirements, there will also be a practical coaching skills event for the managers of the middle managers to increase skills and understanding and to support the work based

assignment requirements.

Sandra Whiles Chief Executive at Blaby District Council said:

“Probably for the first time locally, we will have managers developing together across organisations and across professional groups. This gives us a real opportunity to drive skill development and cultural change as well as building in local strategic issues and priorities, such as efficiency, transformation and shared service agendas into the programme content”

Lisa Butterfill from Local Government East Midlands (LGEM) has been working with the strand since December 2006 to help co-ordinate, shape and monitor the delivery of the programme in conjunction with Aspire and JGP.

Lisa quote “this is a fantastic opportunity for middle managers to come together and develop within a focused and supported learning environment benefiting both the individual and the partner authorities across Leicestershire”

JGP are continuing to work closely with the strand to provide innovative solutions to help the administration and reporting information required to set up and evaluate the middle management development programme.

The aim is to have 80 middle managers to complete the programme in 4 rolling cohorts following the pilot programme.

Leicestershire & Rutland
Improvement Partnership



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If you would like to see
anything about the LRIP
featured in the next edition of this
newsletter please contact :

Phone: 01664 502406
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Do you know who your phone buddies are...?



A Partnership is all about working together as a team, improving and building on what we already have. A 'Phone Buddies' book is currently being put together

so that all Members of the LRIP can have access to each other to share ideas, queries, advice and problem solving; and interact with each other across the Partnership. Each strand is encouraged to form a link with others so the communication can flow.

There are a few remaining contacts that our outstanding— If you have not provided your members contact details please do so as soon as possible.

Please email contacts to Bryony Crouch, Communications Officer at Melton Borough Council at: bcrouch@melton.gov.uk.

Member Development Strand

There is a Member Development Champion Group in each member authority and representatives from this group form the LRIP Member Champion Group, the group responsible for driving through the delivery of the LRIP Member development programme.

Last year the Group carried out a comprehensive development needs assessment for all authorities which formed the basis of developing a programme. This included a competency basis framework – a list of basic competencies that are expected from all councillors, such as chairing meetings, communication skills, knowledge of local government procedures and ICT.

This process identified the most common needs that were agreed by members themselves as the basis of the member development programme.

LGEM and IDEA have been procured to deliver year one of this important programme to members and already this has proved to be popular with more than 100 members from all authorities attending a session so far.

An extensive procurement process has been underway to secure a provider for delivering the Member Development Programme over the next two years. This attracted a strong field of providers and a company known as A.S. Consulting has been successful in winning this contract.

Members have agreed to have the programme independently accredited and quality controlled and London South Bank University have been selected to accredit the programme.

Website address confirmed

The LRIP Website is on it's way. The web address is :www.lrip.org and is set to go live any day now so watch this space.

Training will take place at the beginning of May for Communications Officers and Web Leads who will be allocated shortly by each Strand Lead.

The website will include: latest news, discussion forums, event diaries, and lots more.

Member Development Handbook and Induction

Newly elected members will have information at their fingertips when they begin their duties in May thanks to the LRIP.

Every member will be given a member handbook that will be

supplemented by training in essential council functions such as planning and licensing as well as giving them the skills they need for dealing with the media, holding surgeries and finance.

The LRIP Member Champion Group have developed a programme that shares best practice and enables members to be offered consistent high quality, useful information that they need to carry out their duties in every local authority.



Prospective Councillor Events



Bill Cullen, Lead Officer of the LRIP Member Development strand & Deputy Chief Executive at Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Recruiting and retaining councillors from all walks of life and all ages is an issue for many councils and with the elections coming up in May, members of the LRIP came up with the idea of holding events to give prospective candidates a taste of life as a councillor.

A number of prospective councillor events have been held by LRIP members over the last few months that have given people who have never stood before an insight into life as a councillor from those who really know – current councillors (and in one council's case, their partners). Events have been held in Leicester City, Charnwood, Blaby, Melton and Oadby and Wigston.

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council ran a prospective councillor event in February that was attended by 34 people including 12 prospective councillors as well as current serving councillors.

Promotional leaflets were distributed to current councillors, agents and public places such as libraries, leisure centres and community centres. Bill Cullen, Lead Officer of the LRIP Member Development strand and Deputy Chief Executive at Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council explained,

“We wanted to openly recruit people so as well as general advertising, we targeted people who have already had a taste of public life as a committed volunteer and may now be ready to take the next step and become a borough councillor. So we encouraged trade unions, school governing committees and the chamber of trade to promote this opportunity to their members, and this approach really worked.”



The event was non-political and informal. Group leaders from the three main parties spoke candidly and openly about what prompted them to become a councillor, what they enjoy and what they find challenging. Senior officers gave a general overview of how the council is organised, and there were short presentations on the nomination process and standards for councillors.

A booklet containing details on the nomination process was provided to give prospective councillors information on the next steps.



“The feedback was really positive. The only thing that we would change is the timing of the event. Next time we will run the event some months before the election to enable prospective councillors to come along to several different types of meetings. The whole event was a learning curve, so we were really pleased with how it went and we hope that it will have given some people the information they needed to make an informed decision” added Mr Cullen.

