

PRESS RELEASE



10 July 2007

12 LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE WEST MIDLANDS LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION ARE WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

12 WEST Midlands local authorities and the West Midlands Local Government Association are working in partnership to develop a Regional Coaching Pool to train managers in delivering high quality coaching across the authorities, free of charge.

This innovative and practitioner led project, devised by local government for local government is aimed at improving performance.

Human Resources representatives from Birmingham City Council, Coventry City Council, Herefordshire Council, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council, Telford and Wrekin Borough Council, Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, Warwick District Council, Warwickshire County Council, West Midlands Local Government Association, Wolverhampton City Council and Wychavon District Council developed the two part programme that is financed by the Regional Capacity Building Fund.

The coaches who will be trained to meet ILM level-7 accreditation in coaching will become members of the West Midlands Coaching Pool and will then coach individuals across the 12 local authorities to improve performance.

The Coaching Pool will enable the authorities to save money by training and deploying their own coaches, as opposed to buying in coaches. The Coaching Pool will provide a minimum of 4140 coaching hours across the 12 local authorities per year, once at full capacity.

The coaching pool will allow managers to work on a one to one basis with staff in their teams and across the pool on performance issues such as identifying goals, reviewing options, solving problems and planning actions.

The evidence from research demonstrates that coaching can have a powerful impact on individual performance.

All 12 local authorities in the consortium are very enthusiastic about the project and all of authorities Chief Executive Officers have written letters of support.

Alison Fraser, Chief Executive of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council said: "As the fastest improving Met' in the country, and an organisation that has used coaching to help make those improvements, we are delighted to be part of the Regional Coaching Pool. This unique and exciting collaboration between West Midlands' councils, on the scale proposed, is unprecedented.

WMLGA
Regional Partnership
Centre
Albert House
Quay Place
Birmingham
B1 2RA
Tel: 0121 678 1010
Fax: 0121 678 1049
www.wmlga.gov.uk

The benefits to us all, in terms of enhanced performance and added capacity for management development, promises to be significant and highly influential in the region.”

Olwen Dutton, Chief Executive of the West Midlands Local Government Association said: “We are pleased to be part of the Regional Coaching Pool, working in partnership with local authorities.

“This project will enable West Midlands’ councils to provide improvement in both performance and efficiency, raising the overall performance of the Region.”

The consortium has appointed Office for Public Management (OPM) to deliver coaching training ILM level-7 accreditation and **Bath Consultancy Group** to provide coaching Supervision. These organisations will deliver Part One of the programme which aims to train 150 local government managers as coaches.

Helen Brown, Director of Leadership and Management Development at OPM said: “This is a great opportunity to support this group of authorities in driving forward service improvement through building their coaching capacity. The potential of this approach to development and improved performance is increasingly recognised by the most ambitious and far-sighted public service organisation.”

The initial funded duration of this programme is two and half years but it is hoped that it becomes sustainable in the long term, not only being one of the UK’s largest coach-training programme but also long running and successful.

The project objectives are:

- To provide the organisations to regular access to highly quality and free of charge coaching to their employees in order to improve individual and organisation performance.
- To enhance the culture of learning.
- To raise awareness of coaching skills.
- To share learning from the Regional Coaching Partnership with colleagues in the regionally and nationally.

The programme was financed by the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership who provided £550,000 in funding to the Partnership from £5.9 million that was devolved to the Region.

About the West Midlands Local Government Association

The West Midlands LGA is managing the project on behalf of the 12 local authorities and has a dedicated project team coordinating and administering the project.

WMLGA is the Association of the 38 local authorities in the West Midlands Region, comprising the Metropolitan District Councils of Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton; The Unitary Authorities of Herefordshire, Stoke-on-Trent and Telford and Wrekin; and the County and District Councils of Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire. The WMLGA Secretariat is based in Birmingham

About Office for Public Management (OPM)

Office for Public Management provides innovative and intelligent services in consultancy, people development and research. It is an employee-owned company made up of enthusiastic members who care about people and public services. It helps organisations that want to improve so that they can make a greater social impact, respond to change and meet the needs of their communities.

Office for Public Management's experienced people specialise in leadership and engagement development, organisational and policy development, evaluation, and public engagement. Their shared commitment to social results motivates them to provide good value for money by looking for the most efficient and appropriate course of action and putting together teams with the best fit of skills and experience. They are experts in dealing with complexity and working across boundaries. Strong project management and evidence underpin all their work.

In its role of lead thinking about the future of public services, Office of Public Management invests in public interest activities such as research and seminars and shares its ideas by publishing books and papers.

About the Bath Consultancy Group (www.bathconsultancygroup.com)

Bath Consultancy Group is a leading provider of coaching supervision. The company recently ran an indepth research project with the CIPD on coaching supervision. Dr Peter Hawkins and Nick Smith from Bath Consultancy Group have just published '*Coaching, Mentoring and Organizational Consultancy: Supervision and Development*', McGraw- Hill, 2006.

Bath Consultancy Group works at the leading edge of Organisational Development Practice. The Group believes that organisations can only implement a new strategy and achieve higher levels of performance by changing how people and leaders feel and behave towards organisations they work for and influence. Bath Consultancy Group looks at the whole system to help organisations create leadership and cultural transformations of lasting value.

Bath Consultancy Group was formed in 1986 by members of University of Bath's School of Management. It is now a leading specialist Organisational Development consultancy delivering high impact and influential organisational change for global businesses, UK Public Sector and not-for-profit organisations.

For further information contact:

Ben King, Communications Officer: Tel 0121 678 1058 or 07917 475652.

Jay Rana, Press Officer: Tel 0121 678 1044