



Omagh District
Training Consortium



INSERT FOR WOMEN IN LOCAL COUNCILS NEWLETTER

Women Redress Advancement in Public Sector (WRAPS) is a women's development project which is being piloted over a period of two years in three public sector organisations in Omagh, i.e. Omagh District Council, Omagh College and Sperrin Lakeland Trust.

The project, which is part-funded by the European Social Fund and match-funded by the three participating organisations, is administered by Omagh District Training Consortium (ODTC), with Omagh District Council as the lead partner.

ODTC recognised that a significant proportion of the female population are either employed part-time or work in the lower levels within the local public sector organisations and also recognised these women were critical to the economic growth of the locality. In view of the impending changes in the Public Sector with the Review of Public Administration, the Consortium wanted to ensure a proactive approach to ensuring women in employment in the locality were not further disadvantaged.

The aims of the WRAPS project are two fold:

- To promote the participation of women in training, employment and self-employment through upskilling/reskilling and empowerment processes encouraging the employed to apply for higher graded posts thus redressing the current imbalance.
- To enable women to embrace positively forthcoming changes in preparation for the impact of the Review of Public Administration, equipping them with skills and competencies necessary to advance in the workplace.

The project started on 1 June 2006. During the first year of the Project ODTC have developed and are running a collective learning programme. Areas of development were identified by surveying female staff from the three organisations and a programme put together based on these findings. The year 1 programme included short courses in: Positive Thinking at Work, Personal Effectiveness, Confidence Building & Assertiveness, Life Coaching, Motivation & Morale Building, Communication Skills, Dealing with Difficult People, Presentation Skills, Change Management, Preparation for

Interview, ECDL and introductory courses in e-mail, internet and word processing. In conjunction with EGSA the project has co-ordinated education and career guidance for participants on a one-to-one basis.

An Open Day to promote the project was held on 30 March 2007 and included inspirational female speakers with experience of working in non-traditional sectors, career changes and returning to education as mature students. It also gave an opportunity for Omagh College to promote the part-time courses on offer for the academic year 2007/2008.

Feedback on the project to date has been very positive with 71 beneficiaries having participated to date on a number of the areas listed above. The total number of training places filled on courses to date has been 114, with a projected total of 216 by the end of year 1, 31 May 2007.

Year 2 of the project, which will start on 1 June 2007, will see further development of the collective learning. With the co-operation of Omagh College, Sperrin Lakeland and Omagh District Council, this programme will hone in on areas of need which have been identified during performance appraisals/staff reviews and will also include areas of personal development identified by beneficiaries.

In addition to the collective programme, funding will be available for female staff to participate in accredited learning of their choice and will not necessarily be job specific or related. Other development initiatives for year 2 of the project will include the introduction of a mentoring scheme and job-shadowing scheme.