



28th June 2004

Dear Colleagues

Please find enclosed details of our project on attracting and retaining members of talent and ambition. This is being jointly promoted and funded by the IDeA and the ODPM. We have been working to an Advisory Group that reflects the importance and interest attached to this project across a wide range of partner organisations

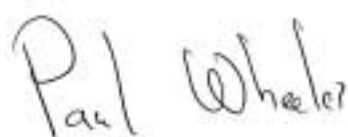
The purpose of the project is to produce a common language and framework that can identify and promote the skills associated with being an effective councillor and council leader. All of us involved with promoting local democracy: political parties, local and central government and national agencies, want to ensure that we have a rich pool of talent willing to come forward to serve as local councillors. We also need to ensure that their continuing development as community leaders is fully supported.

Enclosed with this pack are the first results of this work with a defined set of political skills that can both help attract new talent and also support the existing range of local councillors. These skill sets have been developed in conjunction with a large number of councillors and local authorities and recognise for the first time the importance of political values in shaping and improving member behaviour.

We hope that you will find the enclosed information and case studies of interest. We are interested in your views and comments on the relevance of the framework to the objective of attracting and developing elected councillors. In particular we are keen to work with a range of local authorities in taking the project forward. There are two potential areas for further activity.

We would like to work with a number of local councils and local partners in using the skills framework for promotional campaigns to increase interest and knowledge amongst active citizens in serving as a councillor. Secondly we would like to develop a range of development tools and techniques that can assist the continuing development of councillors. This can include the development of 360 feedback process, personal development plans understanding the dynamics of working in a political group and programmes of political mentoring and support. If you would be interested in being involved in either of these initiatives please contact me (paul.wheeler@idea.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely



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