



Committee and Date
Standards Committee

1 July 2010

Item

7

Public

LOCAL DEMOCRACY WEEK 2010

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Summary

To inform the Committee of the Council's proposed involvement in the arrangements for Local Democracy Week / Month in October 2010.

Recommendations

- A. That the report be noted.

REPORT

Background

1. Local Democracy Week is the main focus for Shropshire's Local Democracy Campaign, encouraging young people to get more involved with, and aware of, their local council and ensuring young people feel able to influence decisions in their local area. Local Democracy Week has gone from strength to strength, during the week a wide range of activities and events have been held. The number of young people participating has increased significantly over the last four years and most importantly the type of young people involved from across Shropshire has broadened to include primary school age, children with disabilities and learning difficulties, looked after children and young people attending the pupil referral units.
2. The work of the Participation Team, Members of Youth Parliament and the Speaking Out Group has been a significant factor in being able to develop and deliver youth led approaches to Local Democracy Week. 2010 Local Democracy events will take place during October with the theme being 'Take Part Take Power'.

Summary of events for this year

3. This year the Council is proposing to run events during the month of October rather than over a week to reduce pressures on delivery and young people's voluntary time.

Proposals for this year's events include:-

3.1 A Democracy Dinner

This is a dinner for young people, councillors and officers to come together to learn a bit about each other in a fun way and to find out about the work of the Members of Youth Parliament. The Council will encourage prospective Youth Parliament candidates to attend this event.

3.2 Primary School Competition

The theme for this years competition is 'What would you do if you ruled Shropshire' and 'What would you change for children in your area?' The winning school would spend the day with people from the Council, who would be talking to the children about their ideas and undertaking a tour of their area. 12 entries will be used to make a calendar of the children's artwork for sale and distribution.

3.3 Secondary school competition

The theme will be along the same lines as the primary school competition, 'What would you change in your area', however they would need to present their entries in the form of an action plan and do a presentation to a 'dragon's den' style panel which would include Members of Youth Parliament, Councillors and Directorate representatives. The winning group would spend the day with people who might be able to help them to develop their action plan.

3.4 Speak Out event

Members of Youth Parliament will run a Speak Out event in October based on one of their manifesto headings 'sports and leisure activities for young people'.

3.5 Shadowing a local Councillor

This will be available to young people across Shropshire to engage with local councillors and others, helping them to learn about, understand and value the role of Local Government. The programme is funded through the National Body for Youth Leadership which is a consortium of leading organisations working together to increase the quality, quantity and diversity of opportunities for young people as

leaders of change in their communities. There is financial support for each young person enrolled and it is an accredited scheme.

3.6 Councillor visits to schools

The Council is looking to recruit councillors to go into schools to promote Local Democracy Week events and Youth Parliament Elections with school councils. The Electoral team have volunteered to cover the colleges. The overall aim would be to help young people understand the election process and encourage them to vote.

3.7 School visits to Shirehall

This is something we offer to schools throughout the year. To meet with officers and councillors to find out how the Council works, what services it offers and the role of the councillor.

3.8 Democracy Workshops

Throughout the year, the Participation Team can offer to deliver in schools democracy workshops.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

None

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The contents of this report are compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Environmental Appraisal

The contents of this report will have no significant impact on the environment.

Risk Management Appraisal

N/A

Community / Consultations Appraisal

The report encourages young people to become involved.

Cabinet Member

N/A

Local Member

All areas of the County.

Appendices

N/A