

June 2010

Dear Colleague

It's Local Democracy Month! October 2010

Following on from a very successful Local Democracy Week in 2009, I am pleased to provide you with information about plans for 2010. We are again organising a series of events which involve children, young people, decision makers and local councillors. It's an opportunity for children and young people to ask questions, express their views, give ideas, make suggestions and get their voices heard.

Local Democracy Month is designed to offer children and young people a 'compelling learning experience' to help them become more involved with decision making and planning at a local level. It supports Citizenship and PSHE, within the curriculum. It provides a useful focus and raises the profile of PSHE and Citizenship by encouraging active citizenship. It highlights opportunities that are available for young people on a local and county level through the year.

The events, using different approaches and styles should appeal to a range of age groups and abilities. This year there are some new activities, as well as the competitions which have been popular in the past. The programme has been devised through consultation and evaluation with children, young people and partner agencies.

I hope you will be able to support Local Democracy activities as part of your school, college or youth project and encourage children and young people to take part in the programme attached. Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely

Karen Bradshaw
Assistant Director of Children and Young People's Services

Shropshire's Programme of Events Local Democracy - October 2010

Democracy Dinner 12 October 6 - 9 pm Prostar Football Stadium, Shrewsbury

The Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs) will host a democracy dinner for councillors, senior officers, young people interested in standing as an MYP and representatives from local youth forums including children in Care Council, Young Carers, Volunteering Talent, young people with disabilities. This is an opportunity to learn about the role of the MYPs, and hear from young people and councillors about local priorities and issues.

The election for MYPs is held every January. Last year's voting resulted in 14,915 votes. Any young person (aged between 11 -18 years, on 10th February 2011), interested in standing as a candidate should read the enclosed advert, complete the application form and contact the MYP worker by Friday 17th September to receive a invitation to the democracy dinner.

Speak Out Day – 'Try Something New' Day – MYP manifesto 5 October 10 am – 3pm Sundorne Sports Village, Shrewsbury

Open to all young people aged 11 – 18 years. Shropshire's young people have voted Sports and Leisure activities as one of their top two priorities that they want their Members of Youth Parliament to work on. Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs) and the county wide Speak Out (SO) group are hosting the day as part of their manifesto commitment. The day will focus on sports and leisure activities for all young people to come along and **Try Something New**. A programme and booking form is enclosed. There will be activities available which will be accessible for young people with disabilities. If you have individuals or groups of young people with disabilities contact us to assess the suitability of activities and access priority booking for sessions. This day will be suitable for young people who would like to try a new sport, young people who are reluctant to be involved in sports and young people who have an interest in setting up new activities in their schools.

'What would you do if you ruled Shropshire?' – Primary/Junior school competition Deadline 1st October 2010

An opportunity for children of primary age range to express their views and ideas on what they would do if they ruled Shropshire. The winning school will be joined by a team of council staff who will work with the children on how they can action their ideas. For further details see letter enclosed.

Terms and conditions on www.shropshireyouth.com

**‘Dragon’s Den: What would you change in your area? – Secondary schools/PRU’s/College/Youth Groups competition
Deadline 1st October 2010**

An opportunity for young people 11-18 years old to say what they would like to change about their area. Entries would need to be entered in the form of an action plan. If shortlisted the group would be invited to do a presentation on the 19th October, 4 – 6 pm at Guildhall, Shrewsbury.

The winning group would spend a day in November (date to be arranged), with people from the Council who would work with them to help develop their action plan. For further details see letter enclosed.

Terms and conditions on www.shropshireyouth.com

Shadowing a local councillor – programme to run from July 2010

This programme will be available to all young people across Shropshire to engage with local councillors and others, helping them to learn about, understand and value the role of local government. This is an accredited scheme requiring 30 hours of volunteering over a 6 week period.

Contact Dawn Lewis 01743 254295/email dawn.lewis@shropshire.gov.uk for further information

Other activities:

Take your councillor to school/college/youth club day

This provides an opportunity for you to contact your local councillor or MP and invite them to talk about local issues of importance to children and young people. Young people and councillors have welcomed this opportunity to break down barriers, explore preconceptions and discuss roles and responsibilities.

A list of councillors is available at www.shropshire.gov.uk

School visits to Shirehall

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

Contact Dawn Lewis if you would like to book a visit.

Local and Area meetings

Local Joint Committees provide the public with an opportunity to meet with local service providers and councillors to talk about issues that are important to them. They have budgets available to support local community projects. To find out more about these go to: www.shropshire.gov.uk/communications.nsf.

Youth Forums and Youth Summits

Youth Forums are run on local area basis, staffed by youth workers. They meet on a regular basis, identify local issues of concern, and involve young people in decision making, running activities and events. To find out more go to www.shropshireyouth.com

Please can you share this information with young people which is also available on www.shropshireyouth.com

Local Democracy events are organised by Shropshire Council, Shropshire Youth Participation Team. For further information contact Dawn Lewis on 01743 254295 or Lorraine Warrender on 01743 256227 email: dawn.lewis@shropshire.gov.uk
lorraine.warrender@shropshire.gov.uk

Enclosures:

- Democracy Dinner letter and invitation
- MYP report, MYP advert, MYP application form, elections schedule, election results evening booking form
- Speak Out day 'Try Something New' event booking form, programme to follow
- Letter detailing 'If you ruled Shropshire' competition
- Letter detailing 'Dragon's Den – 'What would you change in your area' competition