

Local Democracy Week 2010

Summary

1. This report summarises the events and activities planned during Local Democracy Week between 12 – 15 October 2010, in support of raising awareness about the democratic process and the role of Councillors.

Background

2. In October 2009, the Council ran a series of coordinated initiatives around Local Democracy Week. Those activities included an inaugural event about being and becoming a Councillor. That event was extremely successful and is part of this year's programme.
3. Members will recall that what Councils and Councillors do to demonstrate their commitment to holding community events in support of community leadership, is a contributory factor towards achieving Member Development Charter Status with the newly formed Local Government Centre (formerly I&DeA).

Local Democracy Week Programme 2010

4. The following events have been arranged for this years' Local Democracy Week taking place from 12-17 October 2010:

Monday 11 October

'Meet the Mayor' In the morning school children will have the opportunity to meet the mayor, learn about the role as first citizen of the City and take a look around the Lord Mayors official residence 'The Mansion House'.

This event is being managed by York Archaeological Trust for Local Democracy Week

'Schools Council Meeting' in the afternoon a group of school children will be holding their own 'Schools Council Meeting' in the Council Chamber and will learn first hand what it's like to be involved in making decisions affecting children in the city in which they live.

Tuesday 12 October

A Councillor Who Me? - 6pm - 8.30pm at York Medical Society Rooms, 23 Stonegate York

City of York Council wants to encourage enthusiastic, vibrant people of all ages, cultures and walks of life who want to make a difference in their local areas, to consider becoming a Councillor. This is an opportunity for members of the public who want to learn more about what councillors do to come along and find out more including: what a typical day in the life of a councillor involves, the various roles they hold, the decisions they take and the support and training they receive once elected. ***This is a free event and Members of the public wishing to reserve a place should telephone Democratic Services at the Guildhall on 01904 552062 or email democratic.services@york.gov.uk***

Wednesday 13 October

'Corridors of Power' - 4pm A guided tour and insight into the intriguing history of York's fifteenth century Guildhall. Originally a meeting place for the powerful merchant guilds that effectively controlled the government and business climate of York the Guildhall continues to be the hub of local democracy with the majority of York's Council decision making taking place in this wonderful building.

Members of the public will be able to view the recently revealed and restored Victorian Mosaic as well as listen to a wealth of interesting historical facts about this hidden gem and its meeting rooms including the spectacular Council Chamber. In addition, weather permitting there will also be a rare opportunity to venture down Common Hall Lane a vaulted walkway which runs beneath the Guildhall and down to the river. ***This is a free tour and Members of the public wishing to take part should arrive in Guildhall reception 10 mins before the tour begins on the day.***

York Youth Council 2010 New Members Reception at 5pm followed by Meeting of the Youth Council in the Chamber

Young people from across the city have been nominated as representatives from schools, colleges and young people's groups. They will work together as the Youth Council to let local decision makers know what is important to young people in York. The Youth Councillors are all 11- 18 years old. They will go on a training residential to master new skills they will need in their new role. The Youth Council will decide what two local campaigns they want pursue in the next year. The new Youth Councillors will each be receiving a certificate from the Lord Mayor at their welcome reception prior to the meeting..

Thurs14 /Fri15 & Sat16 October

Mansion House Tours - at 11am, 12.30pm and 2pm. The Mansion House is an architectural masterpiece and one of York's great historic treasures. It is the official residence of The Lord Mayor of York who is Chairman of City of York Council and the first citizen of the city. Visitors will receive a guided tour and will be able to view key items from the civic collection on display including silver, paintings and furniture. ***Entry to the Mansion House is free to York Citizens and £5 to non-residents, no need to book.***

Consultation

5. Some consultation has taken place to find out what other directorates may be doing across the Council in support of Local Democracy Week but any further initiatives uncovered will be reported to Members at the meeting.

Options

6. The programme of events for the Week is now largely set and is being initially reported in Your City. This report is largely, therefore, for information in connection with the Steering Groups' role on supporting Member Development in York and working towards achieving Charter Status.

Corporate Strategy 2009/12

7. The aims of Local Democracy Week, in widening participation and involvement within and in the democratic process, accord with the underlying principles of the Councils Corporate Strategy in making York an inclusive City, making sure that all citizens, regardless of race, age, disability, sexual orientation, faith or gender feel included and get involved in York.

Implications

8. There are some financial implications associated with the '*A Councillor, Who, Me Event*'. These, in total, amount to approximately £1k and will be met from within existing budgetary provision. Staff resources to support the events listed will come from within Democratic Services and the Mansion House.

Risk Management

9. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy, the only risk associated with the contents of this report could be the failure to gain Charter Status if the Council were to be seen not to demonstrating a commitment supporting events which promote community leadership and raise community awareness about the democratic process.

Recommendation

10. Members are asked to note the programme of activities for Local Democracy Week, initiated by Democratic Services, in furtherance of the commitment to achieve Member Development Charter Status.

Reason

11. In order to comply with the requirements of the former I&DeA Charter and to actively raise awareness about the democratic process.

Contact Details

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Report Approved

Date 7/9/2010

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

None

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None.

Annexes:

None