

The Youth of Today.
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000674
Head of Democratic Services
Lancaster City Council
Town Hall
Dalton Square
LANCASTER
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July 2009

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to you on behalf of **The Youth of Today** to invite your council to participate in **The Youth of Today Local Councillor Shadowing Programme**, due to be launched in autumn of this year.

The Youth of Today is a consortium of leading youth organisations working together to increase the quality, quantity and diversity of opportunities for young people as leaders of change in their communities.

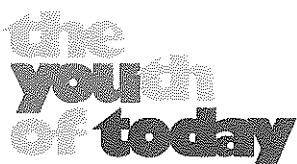
Funded by the *Department of Children, Schools and Families & the Department for Communities and Local Government*, The Youth of Today will launch an exciting new range of programmes over the next two years which includes the Local Councillor Shadowing programme.

This groundbreaking initiative, which gives young people aged 13 -19 who are under represented and/or disadvantaged the chance to shadow their local representatives, aims to involve participants in their local democracy and provide them with the opportunity to experience leadership within their local communities.

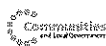
By creating this programme, it is hoped that young participants will gain knowledge and skills which will facilitate their involvement in the democratic process and help them influence decision making. It also provides a unique opportunity for young people to engage with councillors face to face and challenge some of the negative media stereotypes which they constantly meet.

We hope that the programme will be equally rewarding for councillors by exposing them to the issues faced by young people coupled with their hopes and aspirations. The programme also gives councillors the chance to work with young people from a vast range of backgrounds to help them develop their talents and skills.

(continued overleaf)



department for
children, schools and families



Funded and supported by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and Communities and Local Government.

In order to make sure the programme has maximum impact and reaches the intended target audience we have put in place an assessment system to use when councils have expressed an interest in taking part in the shadowing scheme.

The system allows us to look at the range of factors that need to be taken into account when engaging councils in the process. The factors will grow and change as the scheme takes off.

Current Assessment Factors include:

- Government English Regions
- Rank of Average Score Deprivation
- Type of Council
- Area (i.e. Rural/Coastal/Inner City).

Programme Details

- A young person will be linked with a councillor for 25 hours worth of shadowing activities which can take place in a period of between 1 and 6 weeks.
- The Youth of Today will provide you with a 'Menu of Activities' which will give you some ideas of what can be incorporated in the programme. Ultimately - the activities will be agreed by the two parties.
- To ensure that the programme is as sustainable as possible, participants should be encouraged to pursue voluntary work in their local community and remain involved in local democracy if they are keen to.
- Participating councils will be paid a £120 bursary at the end of the programme to cover food and travel expenses incurred by the young person.
- It is very important to take the relevant precautions to safeguard young people involved in the programme, therefore participating councillors will need to undergo a CRB check following registration if this is not already in place.

If you would be interested in participating in this programme please complete the attached form and email it to my colleague Henry Tapp, Programmes & Policy Support Officer at the British Youth Council: henry.tapp@byc.org.uk.

Likewise, if you have any questions or queries concerning the programme, please call Henry on 0207 022 1975.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely,



David Clark
Head of Programmes & Policy
British Youth Council

Local Councillor Shadowing Programme Enquiry Form

Name of council: _____

Name/ role of key contact staff: _____

Key contact email: _____

Key contact telephone: _____

Are you able to run the programme from September? **Yes / No**

If not, what is the earliest date that you can accommodate the programme?

Estimated number of councillors to participate in the programme: _____

Programme Details

- The target audience is young people aged 13 -19 who are under represented within leadership roles and/or are disadvantaged.
- A young person will be linked with a councillor for 25 hours worth of shadowing activities which can take place in a period of between 1 and 6 weeks.
- The Youth of Today will provide you with a 'Menu of Activities' which will give you some ideas of what can be incorporated in the programme. Ultimately - the activities will be agreed by the two parties.
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