



Press Release

12 December 2011

Students flock to Southwark Youth Council launch

Last Tuesday evening, sixty five young people came to the youth council launch event, at Globe Academy School.

During the launch event, prospective youth councillors had an opportunity to attend three workshops to help them understand more about the election process and how to stand as a youth council candidate.

The highlight of the evening was a debate between the students and Peter John, Leader of the Council, Catherine McDonald, cabinet member for children's services, Councillor Richard Livingstone and Councillor David Hubber.

Southwark is looking to recruit 20 young residents to become youth councillors, one of which will represent the borough in the UK Youth Parliament.

Youth councillors are appointed for a period of two years, during which time they are able to gain local politics experience. They have an opportunity to represent young people in Southwark and participate in council decisions affecting them.

A key part of the youth councillor role, is to work in partnership with council departments and other local organisations, who want to incorporate the views of our young people into their work.

Ibrahim Bah, 15, a student at Charter School and current youth councillor said:

"When I was looking to become a youth councillor you had to be elected through the Youth Community Council, but I think this system is a lot fairer."

Southwark was one of the most affected areas during the August riots and the disturbances seemed to act as an 'awakening' for young people, to step forward and be the voice for younger members of the community.

The students that attended the youth council launch were from schools across the borough and included Globe Academy, Sacred Heart School and St Saviour's and Saint Olave's School.

Catherine McDonald, cabinet member for children's services said:

"The launch was fantastic and I was really pleased to see that so many young people interested in becoming a Southwark Youth Councillor.

"We want to encourage as many young people as possible to consider standing for election – it's really important to make sure young people's voices are strongly heard.

"I am committed to ensuring that young people play more of a part in decision – making and the Southwark Youth Council is a great way to make this happen."

Anyone between the age of 13 and 19 years who wants to become a Southwark Youth Councillor must make their application by 13 January.

To find out more about how to become a Southwark Youth Councillor, email youth.council@southwark.gov.uk or contact Davina Bailey on 020 7732 7917.