

Young People Take Over the Council Chamber

A unique event took place on Monday 8 November, which gave young people ranging from 21 years to seven years an opportunity to learn how democracy works. 'Young People take over the Council Chamber' was held in Cornwall Council's Chambers and was arranged just like a real council session, with young people debating issues that are high on their agenda such as bullying, transport, facilities and pollution.

Over 100 hundred young people and delegates attended the event, with representatives from schools across Cornwall, youth forums, young carers and the Youth Parliament and they were joined by guests including the Leader and the Chair of Cornwall Council, Cornwall Councillors and representatives from the voluntary sector.

The event was kicked off with a film from the Youth Parliament showing them recently speaking at the House of Commons, where they had been debating issues such as job opportunities, University fees, the War in Afghanistan and sex education.

This was followed by a very moving and hard hitting talk from six young carers, who explained various situations they face in their young lives including wanting GPs to speak to them and to acknowledge that they are often the primary carer for the adult who is being diagnosed and help with transport when their parents are unable to drive them, both would make an enormous difference to their lives. They thanked the Cornwall Young Carers Project whole-heartedly for the support they have been providing over the years and wanted to raise awareness of its importance, hoping that the project would receive more stability of funding in to the future.

This was followed by presentations from schools with young people, some as young as seven years old, speaking about issues which affect their communities.

Cornwall Councillor, Chris Ridgers, who chaired the event said:

'Today we have heard the voice of the future and that voice gives me every confidence that Cornwall has a great future.'

Pat Harvey, Chair of Cornwall Council also congratulated the young people for the great example they had shown, she said they were great ambassadors for Cornwall and that she hoped this event would be repeated next year.

Cornwall Rural Community Council (CRCC), organised this event and it was funded by Take Part Cornwall and took place during Youth Takeover Week, 5 to 12 November.

For more information about this event please contact Marita Ward, CRCC on 01872 273 952 or email: marita.ward@cornwallrcc.org.uk



