

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Chris Meaden
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Health and Wellbeing
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Director of Public Health/Head of Policy & Performance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to her portfolio.

1. REGENERATION AND PLANNING

Wirral Transport Museum

Good progress is being made on the asset transfer of the museum building and collection to local transport groups. The Council plans retaining ownership of the assets but will enter into a long lease which will enable the volunteers to run and develop the museum into the future. The Business Plan is close to completion and a date for transfer of 1st April 2014 is being targeted. The tramway from Taylor Street to Woodside will remain in Council ownership for operational and maintenance reasons.

Williamson Art Gallery

A number of local groups are currently meeting to discuss future opportunities for the operation of the Williamson Art Gallery. A Business Plan, outlining a range of options will be completed by the end of December 2013 and then this will be reviewed with the groups and the Cabinet Member. If the Business Plan is deliverable then we will seek member authority and a date for transfer will be identified and progress towards this made.

Floral Pavilion

Good progress is being made reviewing the operations of the Floral and identifying new ways of working and new income opportunities. New income streams, along with the increasing use of new technology, are being explored to reduce costs and do more business on line. A new Marketing Manager with considerable experience has recently been recruited to drive this part of the business forward in a more commercial way.

Birkenhead Priory

Officers are now gearing up to commence work on the Priory following the recent successful announcement of the Council securing almost £400,000 of Heritage Lottery Grant.

2. SPORTS AND RECREATION

The transforming leisure services programme is well underway with proposals for the centre improvements at West Kirby and Guinea Gap being finalised, and a programme to improve membership is being launched.

Best Bites have now opened a small cafeteria in the Bidston Tennis Centre and we are working with them to potentially develop their business in other areas. The second cohort of National Citizen Service (16 and 17 year olds) successfully reached the end of their course with the presentation ceremony held at the Light Cinema attended by the Mayor. Two Wirral swimmers (Isobel Thwaite and Thomas Nelson) from the Metro squad have been selected to attend 'England development camps' early in the new year.

3. PARKS AND COUNTRYSIDE

The first meeting of the Wirral Parks and Countryside Partnership and Performance Board has taken place. This is an important new partnership body established as a key part of the Parks Modernisation programme to help drive performance forward.

Outdoor fitness equipment has been installed in the following locations, funded by the NHS: Arrowse Park, Central Park, Birkenhead Park, Victoria Park, Beechwood Estate, Woodchurch, New Ferry Park, Vale Park, Yew Tree Green, Lingham Park and Leasowe Estate.

The former Liscard Hall site in Central Park has been improved through working with the local community. A statue designed by local young people has been installed, along with planting, trees, seating and a performance area.

A horse riding trail has been installed in Arrowse Park and drainage improvement works for football pitches at Arrowse Park have been undertaken, funded by the Football Foundation.

The Life Expectancy outreach project led by Shrewsbury Diocese, supported by the Parks and Countryside team, has resulted in a number of volunteer Green Space Champions supporting people in Birkenhead North so that they can access local green spaces through walking together. This is providing positive health benefits and helping to tackle social isolation.

4. PUBLIC HEALTH

Recovery Convention

I attended the annual Recovery Convention on Tuesday 10th December held for local people recovering from alcohol and drug misuse. This is an important annual event that celebrates the journey to recovery that many local people are on and showcases how they are now contributing to their local community or the local economy, for example via the development of an angling club to obtaining full time employment for the first time in their lives. The focus of drug and alcohol treatment is now on recovery and moving

people through the treatment system to recovery as soon as clinically possible. The Convention is an opportunity to celebrate the successes of local people and skilled staff.

Healthy Take Aways

Public health and environmental health have joined forces to promote healthier options amongst sellers of fast food and their customers. Officers are piloting the 'Takeaway for a Change' scheme, which aims to raise awareness of healthier food, among local families in Rock Ferry over the next couple of months.

This scheme will dovetail with 'Eat Well Wirral' – a healthy eating award that encourages fast food outlets in the area to make changes to the way they serve their food that will have a positive impact on the wellbeing of their customers. The takeaway outlets that are taking part in 'Eat Well Wirral' are not being asked to radically alter their menu; they are simply being asked to introduce some small changes that will make a difference to the healthiness of the food they are serving, for example using salt cellars with fewer holes in to reduce the amount of salt that goes on to meals, or changing their frying techniques, using different cooking oils.

Public Health Annual Report 2012/13

This year's report focuses on social isolation in our community and explores the impact that feeling isolated over a prolonged period of time can have on people's mental and physical wellbeing. Along with highlighting examples of good practice in Wirral, the report makes recommendations as to how we might tackle this growing problem.

Owing to budget restrictions, we have not printed any hard copies this year. The report can be accessed via the council website at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/social-care-and-health/health-wirral/public-health-annual-report>

5. LIBRARY SERVICES

The Central Library at West Kirby is getting ready to re-open shortly after the holiday period with its ground floor re-modelled to accommodate a merged Library One Stop Shop. This will again help consolidate functions and maximise use of our facilities in an area. The ability to offer local work with voluntary and community organisations as well as other public service bodies such as Citizens Advice Bureau colleagues will be further improved after this work.