

**COUNCIL
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CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

1. GARDEN WASTE

The garden waste rounds are to be optimised from April. Around 1800 households will be notified by letter that their collection day is changing. However, many more households may notice a change in collection time on their usual day as new routes have been designed. The 13/14 subscription year has now "closed". Residents wishing to sign up to the subscription service for 14/15 may do so after Easter. The scheme is collecting around 60% of 12/13 garden waste tonnage, which means Wirral is on target to reach 13,000 tonnes forecast as part of the budget option. Early indications are that there has been less displacement of garden waste into the residual (green) wheeled bins) than forecast. So far, residual tonnages have shown no increase. Officers will need to analyse end of year residual tonnage returns from all districts in the region before we can estimate the full impact of this service change, as well as carry out further waste composition work on our own residual waste, scheduled for May 2014. The savings for this budget option have been fully realized.

2. STREET CLEANSING

Biffa have deployed new mechanical sweepers along the Borough's main gateways and shopping areas. These smaller sweepers are successfully tackling smoking related litter in particular and have had a very positive impact on the cleanliness in these areas, with a cleanliness score of 94% being achieved in Quarter 3 for the Corporate "Local Environmental Quality" Indicator - "To maintain cleanliness in key investment areas".

A Waste Investigation Unit has been set up to help tackle alleyway dumping, with particular focus on targeting landlords and contractors who illegally fly tip to avoid waste disposal costs. Cleansing frequencies will return to 4 weekly from April for a period of 2 years, to allow for more effective and timely enforcement activity to be carried out. A "Good Neighbour" Pack has been

developed for residents who want to take action to improve the cleanliness of their alleyways and promote responsible waste management in their street. The pack will be promoted as part of a leaflet drop to 40,000 households in March, and forms part of a wider communications/enforcement campaign to clamp down on alleyway dumping.

3. Update from the Severe Weather Event in December 2013 and January 2014

You will recall that Wirral has experienced two severe weather events over the last couple of months. The first event was an almost unique and perfect storm scenario of high Spring Tide, gale force winds and river surges which occurred at the lunch time high tide on the 5th December 2014. The second event was again gale force winds and high spring tide which occurred on the 5/6 January 2014. The majority of the damage to Wirral infrastructure occurred in the December weather event, and Cabinet authorised a release of £250,000 from Council reserves to undertake immediate repairs to damaged Council assets. Damage occurred along most of Wirral's coastline from New Brighton through Meols, Hoylake and West Kirby and related primarily to street furniture such as promenade benches, litter bins, paving stones, etc. There was also substantial flood related damage to Coronation Park in West Kirby. A repair programme to these damaged assets has begun and the Senior Manager Health, Safety & Resilience is coordinating the repairs with relevant service areas.

It should be noted that some of the repairs will be delayed to allow for the passing of the high Spring tides forecasted to occur every two weeks until the end of March. Repairs are being carried out where they can and preparatory work is also being undertaken.

Looking forward, Central Government has announced various funding schemes for premises and businesses affected by flooding. The Council is not eligible for the vast majority of the announced funding as the costs of repairs fall below the threshold for Wirral. However, the schemes on offer include an initial £20000 grant for the Council to administer, and award to SME's who have been affected by the floods.. It is intended to advertise for applications from businesses who may have been affected . The Council has been working with its colleagues from the Environment Agency reviewing these flooding and weather events, to identify areas of improvement and action which might be taken to mitigate any future events.

There has also been a visit to the affected Wirral areas by Cllr Derek Antrobus, the Chair of the NW Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (NW RFCC). I and Cllr Harry Smith, as the respective Cabinet Portfolio leads for The Environment and Streetscene, also attended the visit. It is vital to continue to maintain pressure on the NW RFCC for funding to undertake improvements to the West Kirby coastal area.