

**CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT**

<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>Councillor Bernie Mooney</b>
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR</b>	<b>Environment And Sustainability</b>
<b>CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER</b>	<b>Mark Smith, Head of Environment &amp; Regulation</b>

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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

**1. WASTE AND RECYCLING**

The Waste and Environmental Streetscene Services Contract is under review. At Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> December, we will consider whether to extend the existing contract with Biffa Waste Services, in return for a range of added value commitments and discounted contract price. Once the decision on the contract is known, Officers intend to develop proposals for improving recycling rates and in so doing reduce the financial burden residual waste.

As the leaf fall season is upon us, residents continue to subscribe to the garden waste service, increasing the total number of subscribers to 38,100. So far this subscription year (June-October) we have collected 718 tonnes more garden waste than in the previous year. This 11% increase on last year's tonnage is primarily due to more residents subscribing, with approximately 3% of the increase being attributed to better seasonal growing conditions.

The Council has been successful in securing external funding to support its first "Waste Apprentice Scheme", where four young people will be given the opportunity to join the Waste and Recycling Team for at least 12 months to learn all about home composting and reducing food waste, in order to promote waste prevention initiatives to local residents. The apprentices will start working with us in December.

**2. STREET CLEANSING**

The Parks and Countryside Service are working closely with waste colleagues and the Disposal Authority to provide two temporary leaf fall transfer sites, making the Biffa leaf removal programme from our streets more efficient than ever. The leaf litter is being taken to White Moss Horticulture in Merseyside, where it is treated and bagged into saleable home compost. Currently the leaf fall programme is on schedule. Members are encouraged to report any issues to Streetscene, as limited resources are available to respond urgently to any hazardous leaf hot spots that we are made aware of.

The Corporate Indicator for Local Environmental Quality continues to overachieve in quarter 2, reaching a score of 97% of streets surveyed along gateways and key investment areas being maintained to an acceptable standard with regards to cleansing and graffiti removal.

### **3. FLY TIPPING**

The national fly tipping database "Fly capture" has published 13/14 statistics for all English districts. Wirral continues to perform well, despite a reduction in environmental enforcement officers. We investigated 99.6% of all fly tipping complaints in 13/14 against an all English district average of 59%.

Two successful fly tipping prosecutions have been taken through the magistrate court in the last three months. One offender was given a conditional discharge and the other was fined. They were ordered to pay over a thousand pounds in costs to the Council. Several more cases are pending.

To date, 230 fixed penalty notices have been issued to residents in a bid to curtail the dumping of rubbish in alleyways by residents and landlords. All terraced properties will be sent an update on the Good neighbour Campaign in December, detailing the outcomes of our investigations so far, and the time limited "free replacement wheeled bin offer". Residents will also be made aware of the implications of failing to get in touch with us if they are issued with a fixed penalty. Recently, non-payment of notices has led to the tripling of fines by the courts with offenders also being ordered to pay court costs of £160 each.

### **4. TRADING STANDARDS ENFORCEMENT UPDATE**

Trading Standards Enforcement Officers have recently successfully prosecuted 2 offenders one for committing door step crime and the other for Trade Mark Act and Food Safety Act offences. In the first case the trader was prosecuted for fraud after taking £900 to purchase bathroom fittings. The District Judge sentenced the defendant to 80 hours community service, costs of £1908.20 and a compensation order of £900. In the second case the offender exposed for sale at the Grange Hotel, Moreton, Vodka labelled as Smirnoff Vodka which upon analysis was not Smirnoff. Wirral Magistrates sentenced the defendant a Fine of £500, costs of £803.90 and a Victim Surcharge £20.

### **5. FOOD SAFETY UPDATE**

Following the introduction of generic working from 1 April 2014 the modernised Environmental Health team has adapted well to the challenges of these changes in work practice. The service has also maintained its high performance in delivering the Council's statutory duties in respect of high risk Food Safety requirements. Wirral Council is one of only four of the thirty six Metropolitan Boroughs to achieve 100% for high risk food inspections (A-C Rated) with Wirral being the twelfth largest out of the thirty six Metropolitan Authorities.

### **6. 2014- 2015 BUDGET OPTION TO TRANSFER BIRKENHEAD KENNELS TO THE CHARITY FRIENDS OF BIRKENHEAD (FOBK)**

All the legal complications associated with the transfer contract, lease agreement and TUPE transfer have now been overcome. Wirral Council and FOBK have now agreed a transfer date of 1December 2014. Although there has been some delays associated with the complex nature of this transfer both parties have remained fully committed to making

this new partnership successfully work. FOBK have now opened their pet shop which is operating from the kennels and all proceeds will be re-invested in to improving the welfare of the dogs that come in to our care. FOBK have also invested in new vans, IT and communications which are ready for the 1 December 2014. Although the delayed transfer will reduce the savings that can be achieved in 2014-2015 this shortfall will be met from within budget. For 2015 onwards this new partnership will deliver a direct annual saving of £40,000 through the transfer of four staff and service responsibilities and provide opportunities to improve the welfare of the dogs at the kennels. The new arrangements will also manage out the existing uncontrollable overspends which are associated with the staffing budget.