

**COUNCIL
14 MARCH 2016**

REPORT OF	COUNCILLOR BERNADETTE MOONEY
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	DAVID ARMSTRONG, ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

1. ATTRACTIVE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT FOR WIRRAL RESIDENTS

Wirral Council continues to hold people to account for not behaving responsibly and damaging our local environment and have issued over 7,000 fixed penalty notices to people across the borough for littering offences. The courts have also been supportive of our campaign, with 900 litter prosecutions since November 2015 resulting in average fines of around £120 plus costs.

Our new approach is working, and is contributing to an improved local environment for residents, as we are aware that instances of litter are reducing on an ongoing basis.

We are also focussing on reducing alleyway dumping, which is another issue our residents have told us is important to them. The 'Tackling Alleyway Dumping' campaign launched in April 2014 and has already resulted in almost 2000 referrals from the waste investigation crew, resulting in 778 litter fixed penalty notices being issued and more than 60 people being prosecuted.

This campaign is also demonstrating a real impact and improvement; a comparison of the net weight of alleyway dumping collected between 2014 and 2015 has demonstrated a significant reduction in tonnage collected over these periods.

During the past year we have also carried out five covert surveillance operations in fly tipping 'hot spot' locations, which have resulted in nine incidents being caught on CCTV. Four people have been cautioned, four incidents are still being investigated and there has been one successful prosecution leading to an imprisonment sentence.

The Council is continuing its efforts to increase recycling through a number of initiatives. The Big Bin Challenge is working with local schools to reduce their waste and increase recycling. 107 schools are engaged in this challenge with three schools recycling over 70% and 39 schools are now recycling between 50% and 70% of their waste.

A recycling campaign was launched in November 2015, to introduce our residents to Wirral's 2020 pledge to create an attractive local environment for Wirral residents; and to remind them of the wide range of items from around the house that they can recycle in their grey bin.

A targeted door-knocking campaign will start in March and will initially focus in areas of low participation and low recycling. This campaign will ensure that residents have a recycling bin, understand the accepted items and know their day of collection and how to present their bins. A reusable bag will also be supplied to all properties in June/July, to help residents store their recycling in the house and transport to their recycling bin.

The Waste Prevention Apprenticeship scheme is now complete. All four apprentices have completed their Level 2 apprenticeships. Three have successfully obtained further employment (two within the Council) and one is well on his way to another position.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND TRADING STANDARDS

Environmental Health and Trading Standards continue to work in partnership to help residents live healthier lives and deliver our priority to reduce levels of inequality, especially in relation to health.

The 'Reduce the Strength of Alcohol' campaign is committed to signing up 30% of Wirral Off Licences and with over 13% of our target group of businesses either signed up to the campaign or compliant through their ethical and responsible policies, the campaign is on target to achieve its 20/20 pledge. One of the key successes of the campaign is within the central Birkenhead and Tranmere area, which is known to have high levels of alcohol related Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime and high densities of Off Licences.

The award winning campaign 'Takeaway for a Change' and the supporting healthy eating award scheme 'Eat Well Wirral' continue to have a positive impact on the health of local residents. Schools and takeaway businesses are working alongside the Council and its partners to promote healthier eating across Wirral. 35 businesses have achieved an Eatwell Wirral award with a further ten currently working towards meeting the required standard. Ten schools have been identified to participate in the scheme where the Year 6 children have higher than the national level of obesity rates and where there is a high density of takeaways within catchment area of the school. To date the 'Takeaway for a Change' program has been delivered in four of these ten schools.