

**COUNCIL**  
**11 JULY 2016**

## **CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT**

<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>Councillor Janette Williamson</b>
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR</b>	<b>Public Health</b>
<b>CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER</b>	<b>Fiona Johnstone Director of Public Health</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. WIRRAL RESIDENTS LIVE HEALTHIER LIVES**

Work is progressing well on the delivery of the Wirral Residents Live Healthier Lives Pledge. More than 200 people have already signed up to a new service supporting Wirral residents to give up smoking. The service is run by the community healthcare organisation ABL Health, on behalf of Wirral Council. I visited a drop-in session at Moreton Health Clinic on World No Tobacco Day, 31<sup>st</sup> May to help promote the service and raise awareness of the new rules around plain, standardised packaging on cigarette packets.

I attended a workshop on the 7<sup>th</sup> June at the Williamson Art Gallery to consider the many issues involved in the use of new psychoactive substances (NPS), sometimes referred to as 'legal highs'. The event was very timely in that the new Psychoactive Substances Act (2016) has just come into force on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2016, which makes so-called 'legal highs' now illegal.

On an almost daily basis, it seems like we have heard continuous news reports highlighting the dangers associated with these substances and the harm they can do, both to individuals and to our local communities. As a Councillor, and particularly as the Portfolio Holder for Public Health, I am of course concerned about how NPS use might affect Wirral people and Wirral communities. This event presented us with an important opportunity to reflect on these issues.

The event was well attended and actions arising include:

- Work will take place to determine local usage of NPS
- Training for local staff to increase their awareness about newly emerging substances

- A review of services available for problematic NPS users

To coincide with World Hypertension Day, several events took place to test the blood pressure of local Health & Social Care staff. Testing sessions took place at Old Market House, Wallasey Town Hall and Cheshire Lines. Trained testers from Wirral CCG and the Stroke Association volunteered to carry out the testing and to give expert advice and support.

A total of 395 staff were tested during the day (160 at Old Market House, 127 at Cheshire Lines and 108 at Wallasey Town Hall).