

COUNCIL
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CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Janette Williamson
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Public Health
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Fiona Johnstone, Director of Public Health

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

1.0 WIRRAL RESIDENTS LIVE HEALTHIER LIVES

Reducing Smoking

Although smoking prevalence continues to reduce, we still have much to do in Wirral to support and encourage people to stop smoking. With this in mind we have been actively promoting Stoptober, encouraging local people to join the thousands of people making a change this October. We have also been developing an updated Smoke Free Wirral Strategy, which we will be launching later in the year.

Work has been ongoing to remove illegal and illicit tobacco from Wirral communities. The majority of businesses are compliant with tobacco display legislation, and greater intelligence regarding illicit tobacco has been found as a result of the introduction of the Reducing the Strength campaign. Our services for 0-19 year olds on Wirral are now working with our smoking cessation providers (ABL Wirral) to provide a smoking cessation offer for young people.

Reducing Alcohol Harm

The new Wirral Alcohol Strategy has been developed, and will be launched later this year. Our Reducing the Strength Campaign continues to develop and has extended now beyond the Birkenhead area, with 46 businesses signed up, and 36 of these taking a supporting licence variation. In addition there are 36 businesses affiliated to the scheme. There have been significant

other benefits to this scheme and we are sharing our learning with other areas across Cheshire and Merseyside.

I am conscious there have been genuine concerns raised about the numbers of deaths of drug and alcohol users. We have taken these concerns extremely seriously and have undertaken a review to fully understand the situation. Our report will be made available publicly later this year.

We do know many of the deaths in service relate to other health conditions rather than addiction to drugs and/or alcohol. We are working to improve the connections and integration with other areas of health care, for example for mental health and alcohol acquired brain injury, and with respiratory care and smoking cessation. All organisations involved in this work are collaborating positively and we will continue to facilitate and encourage continued improvements. Linked to seasonal risk, for example, CGL and Cheshire & Wirral Partnership Trust are working closely together to provide the annual flu vaccination service to drug and alcohol users identified as being at risk.

Promoting healthy eating

Improving attitudes to food is an essential part of work to tackle obesity and food related illness. During September we invited expressions of interest from local community organisations for initiatives to support our ambition to create a better food culture in Wirral. This builds on the already existing schemes which have established a school jam production social enterprise in Woodchurch, free range egg production and healthy snack provision in Birkenhead and bread making courses in Leasowe.

Supporting people to be healthier

There are a number of actions underway to support people to be healthier and increase their wellbeing. The High Streets in Our Communities scheme, which is a key work stream of the Healthier Lives Pledge, aims to improve health and wellbeing and promote economic regeneration by reinventing the high street. This programme of work is being developed across the Council facilitated by Health/Regeneration and the Constituency Managers. During October we will be starting a number of focused conversations with local people and businesses to understand the issues and needs of communities in the first four areas: New Ferry, Laird Street, Liscard and Upton.

We have also been actively promoting the national “Know Your Numbers” blood pressure campaign. Most recently we carried out a public testing/awareness-raising event at Birkenhead market last week. The event

went really well and attracted a lot of attention. The team tested over 300 people during the main session at Birkenhead market.

We have begun the formal commissioning process to put in place a comprehensive advice and information offer for local people which will provide a single easy access service for local people. The service will co-ordinate and deliver wide ranging information and advice services across wellbeing, care and support. The Service will provide integrated information and advice and include support at tribunals for Wirral residents. One of the main aims of the Service is to contribute towards maximising people's independence, helping to prevent reliance and dependency on more intensive care and support.