

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Phill Brightmore
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Environment
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Mark Smith, Strategic Commissioner - Environment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

1 ATTRACTIVE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

After a resolution in this Chamber last year, I am proud Wirral is making great progress towards becoming the first authority in Merseyside to ban single use plastics. These include drinks cups, plastic cutlery, straws, plastic bottles, food packaging, lids and stirrers – which will, through the work we are exploring, be phased out in the borough to cut pollution and protect our beaches.

Our beaches are incredibly important to Wirral, and play a major role in the lives of local residents as well as being an important attraction for visitors. This move will add to the fabulous work carried out by many local groups who work hard to keep our beaches clean by reducing the amount of plastic waste washing up there.

I am delighted to see so many local schools and partner agencies beginning to follow our lead on this important issue, and assure Members we will continue to work and campaign on this issue to ensure Wirral becomes an SUP-free borough.

More on our work to ban SUP in Wirral is available in the [Wirral Globe](#).

We are continuing to support the many hundreds of Wirral residents who go the extra mile in helping their communities, giving up their time to improve their local environments and keep Wirral clean.

One such initiative is our Love Where You Live campaign, which is giving community organisations and groups the opportunity to continue doing their excellent work with extra support from the Council.

The many ‘friends’ groups all across Wirral do outstanding work. I have met and worked with many of them over the past year and we cannot underestimate the importance of the contribution they make to local communities. It is right that the Council does everything possible to support them and demonstrate how highly they are valued.

More information about Love Where You Live is available in the [Wirral Globe](#).

It is also important we not lessen our focus on delivering a complete zero tolerance policy towards environmental crime – issues like fly-tipping, littering and dog fouling affect our residents' quality of life and Wirral's environment and we are determined to continue our clamp down on the small number of people who continue to act irresponsibly.

Therefore I was pleased to see this crackdown continue recently, with two people being successfully prosecuted for allowing their dogs to foul pavements in our borough. The pair were found guilty in their absence after being caught failing to pick up their dog's mess and then subsequently not paying the fixed penalty they were issued with at the time.

There is simply no excuse for leaving dog mess behind in a public place –whenever our enforcement officers see it, they will issue a fixed penalty notice, as they did in these two incidents. What our actions in these cases demonstrate is that we will pursue offenders who subsequently fail to pay the fixed penalty all the way through to the courts where they will end up with a criminal conviction. More on this is available in the [Wirral Globe](#).

Finally in this area, I was delighted to be able to report recently that plans for a major infrastructure improvement in West Kirby are a step closer after the Council was successful in a funding application.

Wirral Council submitted the proposal for a 1.1km floodwall along South Parade in West Kirby to the Environment Agency in the hope of securing Grant Aid for the scheme, which aims to help protect the resort from flooding into the next century.

The bid was approved, meaning the £3m scheme can now progress to the next phase, which will once again involve residents in helping to influence detailed plans as to how the barrier will look and fit in with the needs of the area.

More on this is available in the [Wirral Globe](#).

2 LEISURE & CULTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Already this financial year, we have seen more than 300 events through our parks and leisure services – even despite the recent adverse weather conditions. We are continuing to work on developing our proposal to have Birkenhead Park recognised as a World Heritage Site, which would be a stunning accolade fitting of such a fantastic local asset.

My Cabinet colleague has reported extensively about the exciting cultural programme in place for 2018 – Imagine Wirral – which will provide Wirral residents with the biggest, most extensive and diverse programme of cultural events we have ever delivered.