

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Tom Usher
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Children, Families and Education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children, Families and Education to Members of the Council on matters relevant to the portfolio.

My Portfolio is wide and varied, but at the heart of what we do is the safety of every resident and the necessity to ensure that every child gets the best start in life.

In 2016 Wirral Children’s Services was rated inadequate and subsequently was found to be improving too slowly. I am more than proud as Cabinet Member in this area to report that the latest assessment by inspectors, in June this year, brings Wirral’s Children’s Services out of Government intervention.

This latest judgement marks an increasing effort to improve services for children and families in Wirral since the last inspection, and particularly since the appointment of the new senior leadership team and the prioritisation of Children’s Services improvement by the council. I congratulate staff at all levels of the council, and its partners, who have contributed to this outcome. You can read more about the inspection, and the full report on [Wirral View](#).

With the aim of ensuring our most vulnerable residents are safe and protected, we are currently working with Involve North West to deliver a series of training events to Wirral’s hairdressers, beauticians and other small businesses to help them spot the signs of domestic abuse. The training is a great opportunity for raising awareness of the support that is available for people who are experiencing domestic abuse or worrying about someone who might be. The fact that it is being embraced by the community and the individuals who are signing up is testament to the support that’s out there in our Borough – and the people who are willing to reach out and help others.

Under this same pledge for Domestic Abuse, and focussing on the issue from a different perspective, two members of staff within the Youth Offending Service have recently undertaken specialist training in delivering therapeutic intervention. They are now putting this training into practice and working with families who are high risk were a young person is violent towards their parents and have had Police contact. We are hoping to roll this out on a wider basis in the coming months, continuing to support our most vulnerable.

In terms of ‘feet on the street’, Wirral Community Patrol have recently launched their new website, promoting their services to schools and businesses. The website is supports the modernisation and expansion of the service in its aims to secure new business. As well as school security, the service will now offer alarm and incident response, key holding and a lone worker protection for employees working on site alone. Members can find out more about the offer by visiting their [new website](#).

Working with partners and across all agencies under the Safer Wirral Service is key to ensuring our residents stay safe. Recent work of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team, in partnership with Merseyside Police and Regenda Homes, recently saw a Closure Order issued on a house in Wallasey related to alleged drug dealing.

This decisive action is so effective due to these close working relationships, that being both partners and residents. I hope that residents will see this further action taken and be reassured that their concerns are always taken seriously and acted upon by the authorities.

I'd like to end with an update to the Modern Slavery strategy. To date, training has been delivered to over 120 front line staff across Wirral Council and partners agencies. Wirral Councillors are working closely with City Hearts, a national charity for Modern Slavery victims, to ensure support is coordinated and correctly targeted.