**Working together to make Warrington’s streets safer**

We **all** deserve to feel safe when out and about in Warrington.

The sad reality, however, is that up-and-down the country every single day, people – and particularly women and girls – are subject to harassment, aggression and violence.

We are working to change this in Warrington.

The #SaferStreets campaign, funded through a £550k Home Office grant, will help us to raise awareness of unacceptable behaviours, and will also see the delivery of training in our schools and intensive partnership work, including with local businesses, to ensure that we all do our bit to make our streets safer.

Alongside this, the council is continuing to work with key organisations like Cheshire Police and the PCC, to roll out practical improvements, like enhanced street lighting and CCTV.

You will also begin to see a large visual presence across the town as the #SaferStreets campaign comes to life. You will see the campaign in taxis, in shopping centres, on billboards and throughout communities.

I am in a privileged position to have seen the work of the council to tackle violence and harassment against people – particularly women and girls – and I have talked previously about how proud I am that the council is standing shoulder-to-shoulder with other organisations and groups across Warrington on this important campaign. Harassment, aggression and violence, in any form, is completely unacceptable, and it is so important that we address the behaviours that are linked to intimidation and violence against women and girls.

It is also important to help inform people on how they can become allies, and to take a preventative approach to stop problematic attitudes in the first place. I am therefore pleased to support the education and awareness programme that will be rolled out in our schools, which will help to address important issues and conversations around consent and acceptable behaviours.

Although societally we have a long way to go to completely eradicate harassment and violence against women and girls, #SaferStreetsWarrington, which is the culmination of many months of hard work, has given us a significant platform and momentum to create lasting change.

It is heartening to see that the cross-party motion on this subject - agreed by councillors at the Full Council meeting last March – has set changes in place which will help to make a real difference. Following this meeting the council launched a brief survey which focused on the safety of women in public spaces. This has led to a momentous and widespread partnership campaign which I am hopeful will make a lasting impression on our communities.

Cllr Maureen McLaughlin

Cabinet member for public health and wellbeing

Warrington Borough Council