



# **Poynton with Worth Town Council's Annual Report for 2015/16**

**APRIL 2016**

## CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Town Mayor's Report	3
 <u>Standing Committees</u>	
Community, Order and Public Safety (COPS)	4 - 6
Facilities, Infrastructure and Economic Development (FIED)	6 - 8
Finance and General Purposes (F&GP)	8 - 9
Management and Establishment (M&E)	10
Planning and Environment	10 - 12
 <u>Town Council Representatives to Outside Bodies</u>	
Coppice Road Allotments	13
Poynton In Bloom	13
Poynton-with-Worth Almshouse Trust	14
Projects 4 Poynton	14
Twinning Association of Poynton (TAP)	16
<u>Poynton Update and News (PUN)</u>	17

## **TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT**

It is only right that I start my report by paying tribute to Poynton Town Councillor Isobel Thornton-Maddocks, whose death in July last year was very tragic for such a dedicated young person. Isobel had boundless energy, and showed huge commitment to her role, with close personal involvement in many key issues affecting Poynton. Our thoughts remain with her husband Carl, other members of her family and her close friends – she is greatly missed.

I also pay tribute to David Robbie, Chairman of the Parish Council in 2006 and Jack Hutchcroft, Chairman in 1982, who both died this year. Both David and Jack worked tirelessly for Poynton over decades in various roles in the community. The residents of Poynton will always be grateful for their efforts to improve the lives of people in the Parish.

As the seventh mayor of Poynton, I would like to thank all those who have supported me through the year. I have visited many events at Poynton this year and have been made very welcome. This includes Monday Afternoon Poynton Singers (MAPS) and Cantata, Poynton Show, Poynton Live, Poynton Gilbert and Sullivan, Worth Primary School and Poynton High School.

I have felt proud to promote and represent our village throughout Cheshire East again. Thank you, our Poynton residents, for your support and encouragement throughout my second year, and for your generous contributions to my chosen charity, The Community Centre on Park Lane.

I have enjoyed being your ambassador for Poynton as your Town Mayor, and wish every success to those following.

## TOWN COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Community, Order and Public Safety Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Jos Saunders

Vice Chairman: Cllr. Geoff King

#### Highlights

##### 1. Adult Health and Wellbeing Coordinator

Trish Hill has continued to work on projects which focus on our older residents. It is with much regret that we have learnt that Trish is leaving us to move to Ireland. We would all like to thank her for her achievements. These include:

- a. Men in Sheds, an initiative which enables men to come together to work on various projects. Based in the Community Centre, this has been extremely successful and it is now expanding to two sessions a week.
- b. Time Out Café. This takes place at the Civic Hall every Friday afternoon and has proved a popular place to meet up for refreshments and a chat.
- c. Older Persons Day. This is now a regular fixture in the calendar. Over 350 people attended the last event. Its purpose is to promote local services, organisations and groups that enable older people to maintain their independence, whilst recognising the positive contribution that they make to the community.
- d. Winter Warmth event. A yearly event which focuses on mitigating the effects of cold weather on older people.
- e. Poynton Easy Access Scheme. Launched last year, this is being utilised more and more by residents with mobility issues.
- f. Poynton mini bus. Usage of this has now increased and the focus for this year is to increase the marketing of the service further.

##### 2. Securing the future of the P1 Bus Service

This Committee supported the successful efforts of the Cheshire East Councillors who secured our new P1 service.

### 3. Community Events

This Committee continues to support both the Higher Poynton Summerfest and Christmas Fest events. Both have proved to be extremely successful and are now an integral part of the Poynton social calendar. The Poynton 10K successfully “ran” for a second year. The organisers of the event have donated money towards improving the Inclines.

### 4. Youth Coordinator

Louisa Thorman has now joined our team. She has organised diversionary activities for young people and is currently organising the Poynton Family Sports Festival. Louisa recognises the importance of play parks and open spaces and is currently applying to W.R.E.N. for a grant to replace the play equipment in Hockley Park.

### 5. The Police

Our support for the local Police Community Action Team continues. Our residents need to feel that Poynton is a safe, vibrant community and our partnership with the Police undoubtedly helps to achieve this.

Our Committee has always recognised the importance of engaging with the young people of Poynton. It has been recognised that such engagement can achieve a tangible and measured reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). We have been pleased and proud to support the police in the following engagement activities and strongly believe that this has contributed to the continued reduction in ASB in our village.

The projects include:

- a. The Youth Safety Project
- b. The bike marking scheme
- c. Community links
- d. Fishing competitions
- e. Operation Unlink
- f. Driver engagement days
- g. Speed Watch
- h. Deployment of the Speed Indicator Device

- i. Shop Watch
- j. Police surgeries.

The above list is of course not exhaustive. Our Policing team continue to exploit all methods of communication with the public. Therefore, as well as being visible, on foot, or on bikes, they aim to post a minimum of three Tweets a day, which help to keep our residents informed promptly about their activities around the village. This commitment to engagement and communication undoubtedly contributes to reducing crime in our area.

#### 6. Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

The Poynton CAB outreach service continues to operate on twice weekly basis from the Civic Hall, and last year it helped around 300 clients with a range of sometimes complex issues. The Town Council is determined to sustain this valued service, and is very grateful to Poynton and District Rotary Club and Poynton Round Table for their generous sponsorship. Other offers of sponsorship would be most welcome.

#### 7. The Community Centre

This committee recognises the contribution that the Community Centre makes to our village and was delighted to support them in their successful application for funding from W.R.E.N.

#### 8. Conclusion

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of this Committee who have all worked tirelessly to ensure that Poynton remains a safe, pleasant and vibrant place to live.

### **Facilities, Infrastructure and Economic Development (FIED) Committee**

Chairman: Cllr Howard Murray

Vice Chairman: Cllr Jo Sewart

#### 1. Remit of the FIED Committee

The Committee's remit is to ensure our infrastructure and services are safe, fit for purpose and are regularly maintained to a high standard and with minimum inconvenience to residents. One of the ways that this can be achieved is through

working with Cheshire East Council (CE) on issues such as highway maintenance, street lighting, gritting, and tree maintenance. Poynton Town Council (PTC) has little direct responsibility for these services.

On economic development, the Committee is charged with promoting Poynton and the visitor economy, which includes liaising and promoting where possible with local businesses.

FIED also considers issues such as maintenance of the Civic Hall, the security and maintenance of the two parks owned by the Council, allotments (see separate report), enforcing the byelaws that govern the use of Poynton's parks and open spaces, the provision of benches and notice boards, dealing with Poynton In Bloom, and maintenance of Prince's and Lady's Inclines, both owned in most part by the Town Council.

## 2. Summary of Activities and Events

- Richard Holland has resigned as Operations Manager and taken up an appointment as the fulltime Clerk at Disley Parish Council. We wish him well for the future and thank him for his service to Poynton.
- As a result of the review of the Civic Hall organisation, the Operations Manager's post is to be refocused to deal primarily with infrastructure and assets issues, and their related projects.
- Poynton In Business. This has now become a self-administered organisation aimed at promoting and enabling businesses in Poynton.
- Shared Space. Although CEC appears to have resolved most of the outstanding snagging issues from the build phases, there continues to be a regular list of maintenance issues: lighting, localised flooding, uneven sets and curbs and repairs by utility works. In addition, there has been some public pressure for a pedestrian crossing at the Poynton Green junction. The Committee have reviewed the original plans for this part of the Revitalisation and will be attempting to put together a financial package to bring this and other missing elements in to being.
- Completion of the Library and Civic Hall integration. The aim of this was to safeguard library and information services in Poynton as well as update the Civic Hall facilities. This project has proved to be a success with better and more flexible meeting rooms, as well as the long awaited public toilets. There was some financial and time over run but this was managed well by the project staff.
- Parks and Play Areas. Apart from maintaining the two Poynton Town Council owned parks, the Committee has been pressurising CEC to install

security fencing at Barnaby Road Park. After an unacceptable amount of delay there now appears to be some progress towards this long standing promise to the residents. To the West of the London Road, a member of the public is leading a project to turn the small under used play area at Phillips Bridge in to a children's play park. Unfortunately, the Town Council do not own this land and getting it transferred from CEC is proving to be problematic. Despite this, much progress has been made and we remain hopeful of a positive outcome. We are grateful to Mr Dave Jacks for his initiative and perseverance.

- Woodland Management. Ensuring our historic Inclines are well-maintained remains a key responsibility of the Committee. We are grateful to the previous Operations Manager for establishing a Friends group and arranging for volunteers to participate in the clearing and replanting of the sections of both Inclines that are owned by the Town Council.
- Street Light Replacement. Many areas of Poynton have seen the replacement of street lights with new columns and LED heads. This programme is being run by CEC and it is planned to be rolled out over the coming years to all areas. However, in this early phase only streets where there were one or more damaged columns have seen replacements. There is no planned replacement of lights or columns where they are in private ownership (including PTC ownership).

### **Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee**

Chairman: Cllr Charles Gorst

Vice Chairman: Cllr Mike Beanland

This Committee's main remit is to recommend to full council the amount of precept to be levied in order that the council has sufficient funds to discharge the variety of services and facilities it provides locally.

Once again, this has been made more difficult as we have had to contend with Cheshire East Council continuing to withdraw funding for certain services which the Town Council consider are essential.

One example of this is the operation and maintenance of the Air Quality Monitor at the top of Clifford Road. Given the disruption likely to be caused by the A6 MARR and Poynton Relief Road programmes the Town Council considers it essential that emission levels be monitored, and so has agreed to cover the cost of repairs and ongoing maintenance of the monitor.

Also, Cheshire East continued to reduce the Precept Support Grant made to town and parish councils. Initially, the proposal was to withdraw the grant altogether, but after putting the matter out to consultation, the Committee argued forcibly that the grant should be continued as the effect would have been to increase the precept to an unacceptable level. Cheshire East took this on board with the result that the grant will now be withdrawn gradually over a two-year period.

Furthermore, following the completion of the merger of the Library with the Civic Hall, Cheshire East have now ceased the part funding of the provision of our information services which now have to be met in full from our budget.

The nature of neighbourhood policing is set to change, and as a contingency, the Town Council is investigating the viability of a number of options to ensure that Poynton remains a safe environment. Accordingly, the Committee included the sum of £20,000 in the budget as a reserve against any additional funding requirement.

Overall, despite the additional costs passed down from Cheshire East Council, the increase in the precept requirement for 2016/17 was £35,894. This represents an increase of 9.94% over the previous year, but to put this into perspective, this equates to an increase of 11 pence per week for a Band D household.

Part of the precept is spent on the funding of the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) service held at the Civic Hall on a weekly basis. In December, the Committee invited the Chief Officer of Cheshire East CAB North to address the meeting in order to obtain information as to its value to local people. He informed the meeting that the service is now in its sixth year in Poynton and continues to be a well-used and valued service, averaging almost seven new clients each week. There are two sessions each week and the paid adviser deals with the issues clients bring – welfare benefits, children, consumer debt, employment, housing, relationships etc. – about which clients need information, advice and resolution.

The Committee also has responsibility to ensure that a review of the effectiveness of its internal audit is conducted on an annual basis and to present its Annual Report and Accounts to external auditors for examination. The audit report was received without qualification.

## **Management and Establishment (M&E) Committee**

Chairman Cllr Mrs Jo Sewart

Vice Chairman Cllr Ian Hollingworth

The Management and Establishment Committee is responsible for matters relating to the staff employed by the Town Council, including the regular monitoring of workload, the Town Council's annual Civic Awards, and ensuring that all the Council's policies, procedures and Standing Orders are reviewed and updated on a regular basis, and at least annually.

Since last year's report, the Town Council has appointed Liz Osborn as our Town Clerk on Malcolm Adams' retirement in September and Louisa Thorman as our Youth Coordinator. Three of our staff have moved on to pastures new – our Operations and Events Manager Richard Holland, our Finance and Hirings Manager Mrs Hazel Mason and our Community Transport Coordinator John Laverick. We wish them all success in any new ventures they undertake. We are advertising for new staff and interviews will commence later this month.

We also retain the services of Wirehouse, an employment law and human resources company. They have helped us update and implement a complete range of staff related policies and procedures.

Additionally, on behalf of The Town Council, this committee has the task of managing the Annual Civic Award Scheme. Inviting and reviewing the nominations we receive is one of the highlights of the year for Members of the Committee. Any member of the public is welcome to nominate an individual or group who they feel deserves to be recognised for their contribution to our Community. The Awards are presented by the Town Mayor in July each year.

## **Planning & Environment Committee**

Chairman: Cllr Laurence Clarke

Vice Chairman: Cllr Michael Sewart

1. The Town Council's Planning and Environment Committee met 15 times in the year to April 2016 (more than any other Town Council Committee). Several of these were special meetings – these are required due to the limited time that Cheshire East Council allows the Town Council to consider planning applications.
2. Town Councillors review all planning applications from Poynton, and make a recommendation in each case to Cheshire East Council. The vast majority of planning applications are decided by Planning Officers at CEC using

“delegated powers”, so this is the only formal review of planning applications by elected representatives.

3. Formal responses were also made to licensing applications, planning appeals, tree preservation orders and similar matters.
4. Cheshire East Local Plan

The Cheshire East Local Plan remains a major concern. The Plan will be in force until 2030, and decides where new houses, offices, shops and roads will be built.

Poynton Town Council supported the original version of the Local Plan, which set a target of 200 new houses and 4 hectares of employment land. However, after the opening states of the public examination, the Planning Inspector asked Cheshire East to review several sections of the Local Plan, including the assessment of housing need and Green Belt boundaries.

Cheshire East has now proposed a revised version of the Local Plan, which will require at least 650 new houses and 10 hectares of employment land in Poynton. This will involve significant development in the Green Belt. Cheshire East also wants to remove more land from the Green Belt (the eastern part of the former Woodford Aerodrome site) and “safeguard” it for building after 2030.

It is a matter of regret that Cheshire East failed to properly consult with Poynton Town Council before making these recommendations. The draft Local Plan makes little provision for dealing with the increased traffic, pollution, pressure on public services and other consequences of major developments, or the need to invest in additional infrastructure. The proposed developments will increase traffic on roads that are already highly congested, both within Poynton and on the main routes into Manchester and Stockport.

The Town Council is also concerned that Cheshire East has not followed a “brown field” first policy for development, with development directed towards land previously built on.

The revised Local Plan is currently the subject of public consultation – **closing at 5 pm on Tuesday 19th April**. As Cheshire East refused to hold an exhibition for Poynton residents to explain the proposed changes, the Town Council decided to arrange this ourselves. We are pleased to report that many local residents have already visited the exhibition in the Civic Hall and given their views to Cheshire East. Please could anyone who has not yet done so ensure they have replied before the consultation closes.

The public examination into the Local Plan is expected to resume later this year.

5. A555 SEMMMS Road

Construction of the new road from the A6 to Manchester Airport (known as the SEMMMS Road, A555 and the A6MARR) is continuing. While the planning phase of this scheme is now complete, the Town Council will

continue to lobby Cheshire East and Stockport Council (who are organizing the work) regarding issues such as traffic control.

We remain concerned that, in combination with the temporary lights permitted by Stockport Council as part of the development of the former Woodford Aerodrome site, delays on London Road North and Chester Road are having a serious impact on Poynton residents.

6. Poynton Relief Road

The Town Council continues to support the provision of a relief road, running from the SEMMMS Road junction to London Road. Cheshire East is continuing to develop this scheme, and report that the funding required is now in place.

7. The Town Council remains concerned at the existence of significant air pollution in some areas near London Road South, although the main pollutant, oxides of nitrogen, is currently below the legal limit.

8. We will continue to review any new versions of Cheshire East's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), and will continue to oppose any attempts to designate sites in the Green Belt as "developable".

9. Neighbourhood Plan

The Town Council began the development of a Neighbourhood Plan in order to allow local control of development in more detail than is provided for in the Local Plan. It allows local residents more control over where development takes place and aims to influence the type and quality of new development as well as ensuring that it meets local objectives and needs.

A team of volunteers has continued to work developing the Plan, and further public exhibitions and consultations have been held.

Under the Localism Act, a Neighbourhood Plan gives local people a vote through a local referendum on the plan and if it receives a majority vote in support from those who respond it becomes a full statutory plan. Developers will have to follow the Neighbourhood Plan when submitting planning applications and consult the community in meaningful ways.

## **REPORTS BY TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

### **Coppice Road Allotments**

Town Council representative: Cllr. Howard Murry

The Town Council took on the management of this allotment site in 2014 from Cheshire East Council on a 125 year lease. The Town Council is very grateful to the Coppice Road Allotment Association, and in particular to its Chairman, Phil Swift, for their kind support and guidance, resulting in a successful and pragmatic working partnership with the Town Council to date.

### **Poynton In Bloom**

Town Council representatives: Cllrs. Mrs S Horsman and Mrs R Horsman-Johnson

Chairman - Mr David Hetherington  
Secretary - Mrs Liz Hetherington  
Treasurer – Mrs Nicola Butterworth

Poynton in Bloom is a group of very active hard-working members whose aim is to enhance the village, making it a colourful, cheerful place in which to live and shop. They have been busy planting bulbs, planters, baskets, tubs around the village and the Victoria Fountain, with the most exciting range of plants and colourful displays making visitors welcome. They will be working with the Heritage Garden committee who are creating a new garden next to the Civic Hall.

The annual Garden Safari resumes after a one year break and will be on 16<sup>th</sup> July, with around ten gardens open to the public.

In addition to planting, maintaining and watering is a full time job which this group also undertakes, and they deserve a big 'thank you' from our community, as this can be a very time-consuming task.

As always, if there is anyone wishing to help the group in any way then Poynton in Bloom would be delighted to hear from them.

## **Poynton – with – Worth Almshouse Trust**

Town Council representative: Cllr Charles Gorst

There are six houses available for occupation by people over the age of 65 who are resident in Poynton and have limited means. The charity is administered by five trustees on an ongoing basis.

During the year, the trustees continued with the refurbishment of more of the houses which included installing new kitchens and modern central heating systems. They are all maintained to a high standard.

Towards the end of the year, two of the houses became vacant and have now been successfully re-occupied.

The Trust is financially sound.

## **Projects 4 Poynton** **(formerly known as the Parish Plan Group)**

Town Council representative: Cllr Mr M J Beanland

The Projects 4 Poynton comprises Susan Warrington (Chairman), Malcolm Adams, Dave Dyball (Secretary) - Poynton Baptist Church, Mike Beanland (Treasurer), Cath Roper - Community Development Officer, Poynton High School, Diane Smith - Cheshire East Town Centres Manager, Mandy Chipchase and Jean Egerton, local residents.

### Christmas Fest

Poynton held its ninth Christmas Fest in early December 2015. Several businesses supported the Fest this year. A special mention therefore to these businesses who all made donations, thank you:

The Street Vendors, The Old Curiosity Shop, F5 IT, Prestbury Travel, Henry D Johnstone, Atkins Burgess Opticians, Park Lane Dental Practice, Snape Estate Agents, Rushey Hey Farm, Furness Amusements and Charity Stallholders.

Once again, the high attendance underlined the fact that the event is a firm favourite with the residents of Poynton. We had street musicians and performers keen to return to such a friendly, community event who acknowledged the conviviality and friendliness to be found in Poynton. We had a children's roundabout (thanks to the Farmers Arms for their support), carol singing led by St

George's and the MAPS choirs and a superb firework display held with assistance from United Utilities. Poynton High School students showed off their musical talent on the Tarantella forecourt. Many of the businesses on Park Lane supported the event by remaining open and welcoming customers new and old.

Future Fests will depend on financial support coming from local businesses with contributions towards the event. We are always supportive of local charities who wish to promote their causes by having a stall at the event.

### Brecon Park Renovation

The Team supported the renovations carried out by the Town Council and applied for and received a supporting grant of £2,000 to help towards paying for the necessary improvements.

### Higher Poynton Summerfest

The small band of local volunteers who make up the Friends of Higher Poynton Summerfest team worked hard to deliver a brilliant event in mid-July 2015 not dampened by the weather. Make sure you note the date in your diaries for this year's event, on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> July, for a "must see" village event.

### Drug Proof Your Kids (DPYK)

Created from an early initiative of the Parish Plan Group, this continues to be a successful course. There have been 22 courses and 276 people attending. The DPYK course is implemented by Churches Together in Poynton and is usually run twice a year for 6 weeks (one 2 hour session per week), for the benefit of the whole community. DPYK is a course for parents/guardians of mainly teenage children, providing them with parenting skills as well as drug awareness. The group have also run start-up courses in Knutsford, and Congleton have expressed an interest in doing similar there. The courses have run since September 2006.

### Poynton in Bloom

Volunteers are always welcome to support the group and details can be obtained through the Civic Hall Information Desk. The Town Council have given financial support to their worthy efforts. Future plans include planning a Heritage Garden project for which we have applied to Cheshire East for financial assistance.

### Financial

The group's accounts detailing monies received through grants etc. and expenditure are available from the Treasurer, Mike Beanland, through the Town

Clerk. Last year we applied successfully for £1,000 of funding from Cheshire East Council towards the costs of the Christmas Fest.

### Conclusion

Projects 4 Poynton would like to hear from any Poynton resident with ideas about promoting community wellbeing and events in the village. Please contact any of the Civic Hall team via reception.

## **Twinning Association of Poynton (TAP)**

Town Council representative: Cllr Mr M J Beanland

The Association's Committee has continued to meet regularly, and we were delighted that seven Committee members of the Twinning Association of Poynton (TAP) visited the small town of Haybes in early March to gather information about the town, and to assess the prospects for twinning.

Haybes is nestled in the Ardennes region near Rheims, in France. It is in an attractive and scenic area that lends itself to walking, hiking, cycling, kayaking and outward bound activities. There is good camping on the banks of the Meuse and there are good traditional hotels and B&B establishments with many other places to stay in the surrounding area. There are many places of interest around Haybes. It has many sites of historical interest including castles, mines and citadels. It was devastated in WWI, when within a few days of the declaration of war, Haybes was virtually razed to the ground by fire and bombs. It was the people of Stockport who raised significant sums of money to help with its rebuilding, completed in 1922. There is also a Rotary link in nearby Fumay. Other links are being developed.

The TAP Committee recommend Haybes as a second twinning partner. There was similar enthusiasm on the part of the Mayor of Haybes and his colleagues. Should this be approved, the TAP Committee would place particular emphasis on a schools' exchange programme, and promote cultural and other exchanges between our communities.

### Other Activities

Through the year we raised funds through a Quiz and Garden Party on the 10th June which was attended by our MP Mr David Rutley. We will be at the Poynton Show so please come along to discuss how to develop twinning links with both Érd and Haybes.

Be sure to check out the Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Twinning-Association-of-Poynton-TAP->

and the town council page:

<http://www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk/twinning-association.htm>

TAP holds its AGM in the Royal British Legion in February and new members are always welcome to attend. Details of future events can be obtained from the Information Desk in the Civic Hall.

(Report submitted by the Chairman of TAP)

### **POYNTON UPDATE AND NEWS**

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