



Poynton with Worth Town Council's Annual Report for 2013/14

APRIL 2014

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TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT

Cllr Gabor Bartos

It is my privilege and honour now for the second time to address you as your elected Town Mayor of Poynton with Worth. I used the same sentence on the previous time that I opened my report to Poynton Town Council:

“It is time to reflect back on the past year and take into account the achievements and my contribution to the residents of Poynton with Worth as their Town Mayor.”

My motto was then and it is still

“*Memores-Bony-Consilii*” Mindful of Our Worthy Purpose.

To serve the interest of the people and community that I call my home town for over thirty two years. I hope I didn't fail the expectation of the people of Poynton.

I have attended over fifty engagements so far (some more engagements have yet to be fulfilled). They have ranged from visiting our schools' activities, sport events, theatrical and musical performances, exhibitions, to visiting elderly residents to celebrate their one hundredth birthdays and working very closely with local businesses promoting their wide activities, opening new shops and services to our community.

We have celebrated the 10th anniversary of the twinning agreement between our Hungarian twin town Erd which I initiated in 2000 and work tirelessly for it to succeed.

I attended and awarded many local community organised events like Poynton Family Sports Festival, Older Persons Day, Poynton Show, Higher Poynton Summerfest and many many more very exciting events - the list is endless.

Some of my initiatives have been completed like the annual Mayoral Ball, a youth parliament being developed by our COPS Committee, a Poynton cycling event “Poynton Pedal” which will be held alongside the Higher Poynton Summerfest.

The chosen charity for my mayoral year is again MacMillan Cancer Support. With my Mayor's Ball I managed to raise £ 2,700. I have supported Poynton High School's organised Big Coffee Morning, and being inspired by that I have arranged a “Mayor's Big Coffee Morning” at the Civic Hall which will be a family fun day where local school children will perform for visitors. This will raise much needed funds for Macmillan, prominent among national cancer awareness schemes.

I have represented Poynton outside its boundaries at many engagements such as Mayors' Balls, and conferences organised by neighbouring towns and villages. I also visited Poynton's Hungarian twin town Erd, and twinning conferences (at my expense), where I was showing off to other twin town delegates our new and exciting town centre to see our unique and innovative project with an open invitation to visit Poynton and its surroundings and tourist attractions.

Maybe the most special memory I can recall for this past year is my investiture to the 600 year old Knightly Order of the Imperial and Royal Dragon Court and Order, the noble Ordo Draconum by the sword of Henry V. This ceremony was held at York Mansion House, witnessed by local dignitaries, Deputy Mayor and Mayoress, High Sheriff of Yorkshire and the Cultural and Business Attaches from the Hungarian Embassy in London.

I wish I could have done more to represent the interests of the people of Poynton but time was limited to achieve it all. I believe I have served you with dignity, pride and honour. But all these I couldn't have done without the support of my Mayor's Consort, my wife Jennifer. I would like to thank you for the trust you have given me this past year as the Mayor of Poynton with Worth.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community Order and Public Safety (COPS) Committee

Chairman Cllr Jos Saunders

Vice Chairman: Cllr Joan Sewart

Once more this has been a very productive and active year for this Committee. Again, much of our time and energy has been spent ensuring that our village remains a vibrant and safe environment, whilst continuing to meet the needs of our residents. The demography of our village means that we have a high proportion of elderly people living in Poynton. The objectives and achievements of this year reflect this.

1. Appointment of an Adult Health and Wellbeing Coordinator

This Committee has long recognised that coordination of services for the elderly can only benefit our residents. Therefore after the success of the Parish Plan Group in securing match funding, we have now recruited Trish Hill into the post. One of the key objectives for Trish will be to improve public and community transport for our elderly residents. Our local buses were under threat (see para. 4 below) and whilst that threat has now abated, transport remains a key concern of this Committee. We are therefore delighted that Trish has been actively involved in securing £62,500 in grant funding for two community transport projects (see para 2). Trish has fully involved herself in her role, and areas on which she has concentrated include:

a) Message in a Bottle

400 of these containers, in which to keep emergency contact details, have been given out to our more vulnerable residents. This initiative has enabled a database to be compiled which identifies those who may need assistance e.g. in severe weather events.

b) Time Out Cafe

This was initiated last year and has proved a very popular place to meet up on a Friday afternoon to enjoy refreshments and a chat. It is also used as a conduit for information from both the Town Council and other relevant services and organisations. It has proved to be so popular that it is now expanding! On the last Saturday of the month it will be open from 10am to noon. Trish is also currently looking at suitable venues for an Outreach Cafe.

c) Intergenerational I.T. Training

This is an initiative between Trish and Erica Adkins our Youth Coordinator. After successfully bidding for 7 Ipads from the Poynton Local Area Partnership (LAP), training sessions were organised for our older residents which are delivered by students from Poynton High School. The sessions take place on a Thursday and have proved to be extremely popular. The Ipads are used for such activities as Skyping friends and family, researching holidays, and accessing price comparison sites.

d) Older Persons Day

The first of these took place last October and plans are already in place for this year's event which will take place on 4th October. The purpose of it is to promote local services, organisations and groups that enable older people to be valued, respected and recognised for the positive contribution that they make to our community.

e) Increased involvement with external providers

A key component of this role is to "signpost" our residents to facilities and services which will promote their health and wellbeing. Close links with other providers is therefore vital. Trish has promoted the role at relevant stakeholder events and now has close links with the Winter Warmth Group at Cheshire East, the Caring Together Stakeholder panel (which is an Eastern Clinical Commissioning Group initiative which seeks to closely integrate health and social care), as well as working in partnership with Age UK and other charitable groups.

2. Community Transport Grant Funding

We are delighted to announce that the Town Council led by this Committee and its Cheshire East Councillor, has been successful in obtaining £62,500 in grant funding from Cheshire East Council for two projects. These are a 'Shopmobility' scheme and the provision of two minibuses which will be used for community transport. Shopmobility is expected to operate from the Cooperative Independent Living premises on Park Lane who will administer it in collaboration with Poynton Town Council. It is anticipated that this scheme will enable people to access local services and social events and it will be available to anyone irrespective of age. At this juncture, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Community Transport Association for contributing to the success of both bids.

The Community Transport scheme will operate as a not for profit passenger service which will provide a transport solution for those who, for a variety of reasons, find it difficult to use conventional transport. It will also be available for community and voluntary groups who require it to participate in social, educational and leisure facilities.

The scheme will work in close partnership with Disley and other areas within the Poynton LAP, thus bringing more people into the village and contributing to its sustainability.

3. Poynton Home Services Scheme

This has now been in operation for 12 months, and is available to all. It has been very successful and Trish Hill in her role as Adult Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, has continued to improve and expand its service. Reputable local contractors who have signed up to the Scheme provide services that include, painting and decorating, gardening, plumbing, joinery and computer skills. There are now 16 contractors signed up and a growing number of residents are making use of the Scheme. Feedback has been positive from both customers and contractors.

4. Bus Services

Our bus services were under threat of withdrawal and this Committee supported the successful efforts of the Cheshire East Councillors that secured our new P1 service. For the first time, the west of the village now enjoys a regular, frequent service, whilst the east has a more frequent service which enables access to both Poynton and Hazel Grove Stations.

5. Higher Poynton Summerfest

This Committee continues to support community events and was delighted to be able to support the dedicated and enthusiastic team of volunteers who worked tirelessly on this event. The Fest proved to be an absolute success, especially for the author of this report who came second in “the dog that looks most like its owner” competition! This event is now going to be an integral part of the Poynton social calendar, the next one is on Sunday 13th July 2014. Like the Christmas Fest, it promises to be a fabulous event with literally something for everyone, with the Town Council as principle sponsor.

6. Youth Coordinator

Our Committee continues to recognise the importance of activities for our younger residents and our Youth Coordinator Erica Adkins is working tremendously hard to make sure that their needs are met. Her achievements include:

a) Poynton Family Sports Festival 2013

Last year's Family Fun Day saw over 700 people attend. 200 people were awarded with medals on the day for taking part in various physical activities. This event raised over £600 towards the legacy fund which has been created to encourage and support local sporting activity.

b) Sports activities

In partnership with the police a number of summer and Friday divert sports sessions have been held. To further develop these a rounders training course has been organised using some of the legacy fund money. It is hoped that this sport will encourage more young girls to become involved in sport.

c) Youth Safety Projects

These projects are now very well established and are a fantastic example of the Town Council and the police working together to address such issues as emotional wellbeing, drugs and alcohol in our young people. Two sessions have been delivered and as well as the above, our young people have had the opportunity to learn first aid as well as participating in sporting activities.

d) Intergenerational Activities.

This is a new project which is delivered in collaboration with Trish Hill. IT training is delivered to our older residents with support from our 6th Form students.

e) Poynton Bike Scheme (with PCSO Chris Luke)

Bike marking and safety checks have been carried out at a variety of community events and at after school sessions at the High School. Since the scheme started nearly 200 bikes have been marked!

f) Safeguarding and Child Protection Training Course

A successful free course covering safeguarding and child protection was organised between the Town Council and the Hockley Centre. 25 people attended, and congratulations to them on completing the course. No doubt they

will be contributing to the vibrancy of our village in terms of running activities for our young people.

7. 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. This support is underlined by the renewal of a three year Service Level Agreement for the PCSOs and the appointment of a 5th PCSO.

Our Committee has always recognised the importance of engaging with the young people of Poynton. It has been recognised that engagement can achieve a tangible and measured reduction in anti-social behaviour. 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 anti-social behaviour in our village.

The projects include:

The Youth Safety Project; Community Links; Fishing Competitions; Operation Unlink; Driver Engagement Days; Speed Watch; Speed Indicator Device Deployment; Shop Watch; Police Surgeries.

This list is not exhaustive and also does not take into account the work they do to minimise vehicle obstruction in the 'Shared Space' zones. Our policing team also deserve thanks for their continued commitment to exploiting every possible means of communication with the public. We are all aware that communication and engagement is the key to reducing crime in the area. Our policing team now aim to post a minimum of three Tweets a day, which help to keep our residents informed promptly about their activities around the village.

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 in which to live.

Facilities, Infrastructure and Economic Development (FIED) Committee

Chairman: Cllr Alex Smith

Vice Chairman: Cllr Geoff King

1. Highlights

Operations Manager: our most effective tool in the day to day management of Cheshire East Highways

Poynton In Business: promoting over 200 businesses in Poynton

Shared Space remedial work: finally planned to be sorted by September 2014, working in off peak periods

Library and Civic Hall merger: Safeguarding library facilities for Poynton

Parks and play areas: Safe play equipment for our well-used play areas

Woodland management: Ensuring our historic Inclines are well-maintained

Superfast Broadband (SfB): 95% of Poynton should have SfB in 2015

2. Remit of the FIED Committee

The Committee's remit includes working with Cheshire East Council (CEC) on issues such as highway maintenance, street lighting, gritting, and tree maintenance. It is worth remembering that Poynton Town Council has no direct responsibility for any of these services: what we try to do is work with CEC 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. On economic development, the Committee is charged with promoting Poynton and the visitor economy, which includes liaising with all businesses located in the village.

FIED also considers issues such as maintenance of the Civic Hall, the security and maintenance of the two parks owned by the Council, allotments, 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.

3. Operations Manager

Richard Holland, the Town Council's full time Operations Manager, reports to FIED. He is our main interface with CEC Highways and the utility companies who seem to have a habit of digging up our roads with absolutely no advance warning whatsoever.

Richard is also our main interface with Poynton's business community and hosts the regular Poynton In Business breakfasts and evening sessions, and facilitates the Poynton Business Awards, a Town Council initiative.

Richard produces for the Committee a monthly report and log that ably demonstrates the myriad of day to day operational issues affecting Poynton. Ranging from highways and lighting issues to tree maintenance and to meetings of Poynton In Business, his reports cover too much to be included in this summary. If interested, readers are encouraged to read his reports, which can be made available at the Civic Hall.

Richard has also been instrumental in ensuring we have more litter bins and Town Council noticeboards that are used to both promote Council and community information and to promote the village to residents and visitors alike.

4. Poynton In Business

Through Richard's stewardship and enthusiasm, Poynton in Business is thriving as a group dedicated to promoting Poynton's 200 businesses to both residents and visitors alike.

An important new initiative in 2013 was the inaugural P.A.C.E. Awards (Poynton Awards for Customer Excellence) nominated by residents and awarded to Poynton businesses.

The category winners were:

- Retail/Eateries **Mates DIY**
- National/Regional Chain **Waitrose**
- Services Provider **Anson Engine Museum**
- Business-to-Business **typo-graphics**

Mates also won the award for **2013 Poynton Business of the Year** and the **2013 Poynton Employee of the Year** went to Mates employee **Josh Palmer**.

5. Shared Space Remedials

Poynton can be justifiably proud of its revitalised village centre of which its award- winning Shared Space scheme is a vital feature, helping to virtually eliminate empty shops and increase the number of shoppers in the village. It is proving successful in providing a safe and vibrant place to live, work, shop and play, and without a relief road, is doing a sterling job in safely moving over 26,000 vehicles a day through one of the busiest A road junctions in the area. The newly created parking bays within Shared Space, on Chester Road and London Roads North and South were always intended to benefit local businesses by offering short-term spaces for shoppers and passing trade. The reality is that they are mainly occupied for long periods by local employees and even

advertising vans, so the Town Council is reluctantly introducing a two hour waiting limit, with no return for two hours.

It is unsurprising that a scheme as innovative as this will have some teething problems, and residents will be aware that there are some sunken grids, loose granite blocks and other issues that are currently tarnishing the scheme. The fact that these issues are still outstanding 2 years since they were first identified is a source of frustration to the Committee.

However the good news is that CEC's experts now believe, with a few relatively uncomplicated modifications, the scheme will soon be repaired to the standard envisaged in the original design. The repairs will have to involve some traffic management controls but to minimise inconvenience to all the repairs will, wherever possible, be carried out at off peak times and will be completed by the end of this summer's school holidays. The Town Council, through its normal communication channels, will do its utmost to give residents advance notice of this work.

6. Clifford Road

In May 2012, temporary road narrowing was implemented on Clifford Road by CEC on a trial basis, subject to allow for monitoring and feedback from residents directly affected by the scheme. As reported to the Town Assembly in 2013 the scheme had been implemented with no prior consultation with either residents or the Town Council. Predictably this met with wide scale opposition from residents and Council alike. CEC have recently advised Clifford Rd residents that the scheme will be removed over the coming months. This has caused further angst. In fairness to CEC, the scheme was always a trial and was temporary, but FIED will work with CEC to ensure affected residents have their views considered.

7. Civic Centre and Library Complex

Work is scheduled to start in early May to link the Civic Hall and Library. Besides safeguarding library facilities at Poynton, the improvements will also include public toilets, improved landscaping, an improved Information Centre, and enhanced Civic Hall facilities for hirers and residents. FIED is working closely with CEC on this project and believe when the project is completed towards the end of the year, it will be of real value to all residents.

8. Parks and Play Areas

Play equipment is well used in Poynton's parks but does have a limited life. FIED were successful in getting CEC to replace the play equipment they unilaterally removed from Mount Vernon Field, Higher Poynton, on safety grounds and have submitted substantial bids to get third party funding to replace equipment at the Town Council-owned Hockley and Brecon parks.

9. Woodland Management

An important yet essential new initiative has been to ensure the woodland that surrounds and lines the much used Inclines is managed and maintained. Through sponsorship by local business and help from local residents and scouts, there have already been significant improvements made to the Inclines. During 2014, we are hopeful there will be further improvement – including to the Incline surfaces. Recent flooding, now thought to have been caused by United Utility pipes used to control water from old mine shafts, will hopefully have been rectified by the time this report is published.

10. Allotments

The process of the Town Council taking over responsibility for its allotments from CEC on a 125 year lease has now taken over 2 years. The Committee remains committed to supporting its allotments and is hopeful, that once in our control, we will actually be able to increase the number of allotments available for rent.

11. Superfast Broadband

The vast majority of Poynton should have the capability to experience Superfast Broadband by the end of 2015. The Committee continues to do whatever is possible to ensure the remaining small minority in Poynton is not forgotten. Some of the internet speeds experienced in peripheral areas are woeful. Our target is for all Poynton residents to have access to SfB but this may take some time.....

12. Conclusion

As usual, this has been a very busy year for members of FIED. I would like to thank all members of the Committee and working groups for their continued enthusiasm and support throughout the year. A large part of the successful effort to keep Poynton a safe, vibrant and pleasant place to live is due to the efforts of Malcolm Adams the Town Clerk, Richard Holland, the Operations and Events Manager, Gordon Letij, the Village Handyman and the rest of the staff at the Civic Hall. It is very easy to take such unsung heroes for granted, and the Council and residents are hugely fortunate to have such an enthusiastic and capable team that help to make Poynton such a fantastic place to live, work, shop and play. The Committee thank them for their good work.

Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee

Chairman: Cllr Charles Gorst

Vice Chairman: Cllr Mike Beanland

1. Annual Precept

The members of this Committee include the Chairmen of the Town Council's other three spending Committees. Its main role is to ensure that the Town Council has sufficient funds in order to deliver the services to Poynton residents which they would not otherwise receive, and which are not provided by Cheshire East Council. These funds are raised by way of a precept levied on residents and included in their annual Council Tax bill.

These services include the maintenance of two play areas, the two Inclines and graffiti removal. The Town Council also owns and maintains the Civic Hall, which has an important role as a community hub and provides facilities for such organisations as the CAB, You and Yours Counselling Service, U3A, St John Ambulance, Age UK, bridge and badminton clubs, as well as providing a regular venue for the NHS Blood Unit.

In addition, the Town Council part-funds five PCSOs who provide excellent community support, and also employs an Operations and Events Manager and a part time Village Handyman. Also, for some years, the Town Council has provided a Youth Co-ordinator and during this past year a new post of Adult Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator was created to look after the needs of those older members of our community.

The precept also provides funding to support community events including Poynton in Bloom, the Higher Poynton Summerfest, the Christmas Fest on Park Lane and a Summer Sports Festival, amongst others. This year events commemorating the start of the First World War are also likely to benefit from some modest Town Council funding. There is also provision of a fund to challenge any local development proposals which might affect the Green Belt surrounding the village.

The amount of precept requested from residents to pay for this wide range of additional services equates to about £60 for the year for a typical Band D household. This represents an increase of just over 12% above the current year which is a 12p per week increase. Almost half of this increase has arisen because Cheshire East Council has decided to stop funding two important services, the provision of CCTV and Air Quality monitoring which the Town

Council has decided is very important to the village and has therefore decided to make provision for this expenditure.

2. Reserves

The Committee regularly reviews the Town Council's Reserves to ensure sufficient funds are available, not only for emergencies, but for major capital projects. This year the Town Council will enter into a joint project with Cheshire East Council to merge the Civic Hall with the Library in order to provide a modernisation of the library service and provide an attractive entrance, reception area and public toilets. The Town Council will also take the opportunity to reconfigure the Civic Hall in order to modernise it and provide additional accommodation for hirers, as well as reroofing the building which is a major expense in its own right.

The cost of the Town Council's contribution to the above major works will be found from Reserves which have been built up over a number of years without having to resort to a further increase in next year's precept.

3. Visitor Economy

The Visitor Economy Working Group also reports to this Committee and during the year the group has been involved with several initiatives including the production of an Eateries Guide, Mining Heritage Walk and several other walks, Information Boards at Poynton Marina and Fountain Place. Further details can be viewed and downloaded via the Visitor Information section of the Council's website. Meanwhile the 'Welcome to Poynton' video continues to be widely viewed, both here and overseas, and has drawn praise from residents and visitors alike. It can be accessed via the Town Council website and the social media site YouTube.

4. Middlewood Station

The Middlewood Station Working Group also reported to this Committee and the group continues in its efforts to increase usage of the station by looking at ways to improve access and seek improvements to the timetable.

5. Conclusion

Finally, once again I would like to thank all members of the Committee, together with the Town Clerk, in ensuring that the Town Council's financial affairs are kept in good order and that the services provided by the Town Council not only represent good value but contribute to making Poynton such a desirable place to live and bring up families, and that the facilities in the village for both young and older people are enhanced.

Management and Establishment (M&E) Committee

Chairman Cllr Phil Hoyland

Vice Chairman Cllr Alex Smith

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 transfer and devolution of services from Cheshire East Council, 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 we have recruited a new member of staff in the shape of an Adult Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, Trish Hill. Trish coordinates and organises events, liaising with other local agencies to ensure that all of our more elderly and vulnerable residents have access to the services they need. Trish is already making a big impact locally and is working closely with Erica Adkins, our Youth Coordinator.

The Committee has updated the Town Council's Standing Orders, which lay down a clear framework for how the Council must conduct its business. The Committee has also updated the formal complaints procedure, which provides a mechanism to deal with complaints against staff or Councillors, locally, whenever possible. The procedure is intended to provide an opportunity to deal with complaints quickly and effectively at a local level.

We have also retained the services of Wirehouse, an employment law and human resources company, who have replaced Cheshire East Council as our chosen provider of this service. Wirehouse have already helped us to update and implement a complete range of staff related policies and procedures. In consultation with our staff, they are also in the process of helping us to update all of our staff contracts.

The Committee also has the task of managing the annual Civic Awards scheme, on behalf of the Town Council. Inviting and reviewing the nominations we receive is one of the highlights of the year for members of the Committee. We are continually amazed and delighted to see the fantastic and selfless contributions made by Award winners. Any member of the public is welcome to nominate an individual or group who they feel deserves to be recognised for their contribution to the Community.

Planning & Environment Committee

Chairman: Cllr Laurence Clarke

Vice Chairman: Cllr Roger West

1. The Town Council's Planning and Environment Committee met 18 times between April 2013 and April 2014. Five of these were special meetings, which were usually necessary due to delays by Cheshire East Council forwarding planning applications to the Town Council.
2. Town Councillors review all planning applications from Poynton, and make a recommendation in each case to Cheshire East Council (CEC). 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 and similar matters.
4. Several important planning issues are currently being progressed. These include:

a) The Cheshire East Local Plan

Cheshire East Council has now approved the final draft of the new Local Plan. This will be in force until 2030, and will decide where new houses, offices, shops and roads will be built across Cheshire East.

At the start of the Local Plan process in 2010, developers proposed building 2,800 new houses, plus some industrial sites, on Green Belt land around the village.

In response, the Town Council argued for our long-standing policy of opposing new housing development, protecting the village environment and maintaining the existing Green Belt around Poynton. We urged a "Brown Field First" policy for development, using land previously built on.

The response to earlier consultations suggests that a large majority of local people agree with our support for the existing Green Belt boundaries and oppose any major developments around Poynton.

Cheshire East has listened to our arguments and the draft Local Plan will propose that Poynton should have only 200 new houses plus 3 hectares of employment land. A further 5 to 10 hectares will be reserved as "safeguarded land", which may be used for development in the future. Other towns of broadly similar size, such as Knutsford, Middlewich, Alsager and Sandbach, have much larger housing targets.

At present, Cheshire East have not proposed where any new building in Poynton should take place. This will be decided later this year, as part of the Site

Allocation policy, with full public consultation. The Town Council will press for new building to be on previously developed 'brown field' sites wherever possible.

The draft Local Plan is now in a six week period when representations can be made by the public. This ends on Friday 25th April 2014. Developers and landowners who want to build thousands of houses around Poynton will probably object to the draft Plan and ask for it to be changed to allow building across the Green Belt.

The Local Plan will be considered at a public examination later this year by an independent Planning Inspector, who will consider all representations on the draft proposals. Developers may employ lawyers to ask the Inspector to overturn Cheshire East's plans and allow a lot more development in Poynton.

The Town Council is urging everyone to write and support the current proposals, and oppose massive building in the Green Belt.

b) Former Woodford Aerodrome Site

A planning application for 950 houses, plus a primary school and some industrial buildings, has been submitted by Harrow Estates (Redrow Homes). This relates only to the part of the site in Stockport Council's area.

The Town Council has made representations to Stockport Council on these plans. We are concerned at the possible impacts on Poynton, including increased traffic on local roads and stress on public services, including medical centres and schools. Environmental issues, such as possible flooding caused by rainfall run-off, were also raised.

We also urged that Stockport impose strict controls during construction, to prevent problems such as noise, dust and additional traffic.

c) A555 SEMMMS Road

The proposed new relief road from the A6 to Manchester Airport is now being considered as a formal planning application. (It is not part of the Cheshire East Local Plan, as it also affects Stockport and Manchester). If approved, the road will run within Poynton from near Brookside Garden Centre to Chester Road.

d) Poynton Relief Road

The Local Plan also supports a Poynton Relief Road from Chester Road (A5149) to London Road (A523) by the former Little Chef cafe. Funding for this scheme is still being finalised – it is hoped construction can start in 2017.

5. 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. We have agreed to take over

the funding of the air monitoring device on Clifford Road from Cheshire East. This will be an additional cost on Poynton's Council Tax payers, but we believe it is important to have accurate information on air pollution levels. Possible changes during the construction (if approved) of the SEMMMS road will be monitored closely.

6. We have reviewed each new version 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".

7. With financial support from the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Town Council is starting to develop a Neighbourhood Plan to allow local control of development in more detail than is provided for in the Local Plan. A leaflet seeking volunteers to help with the Plan has been circulated with April's Poynton Post – spare copies are available from the Civic Hall.

8. The Annual Litter Pick in late March 2014 was a success and cleaned up many areas of the village. We would like to thank everyone who volunteered to help Keep Poynton Tidy.

REPORTS BY TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

2448 Squadron Air Training Corps (ATC)

Town Council Representative: Erica Adkins, Youth Coordinator

As the Town Council's appointed member to 2448 Squadron ATC, this is my report regarding the activities of the Squadron. This year's report is submitted under the headings: activities; achievements and administration.

1. Activities

A normal programme of ATC activities such as gliding, air experience flying, Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme (D of E), aviation studies, first aid and shooting has been run throughout the year, as well as many sports for both boys and girls.

The Squadron has been very active in all the sporting events undertaken through the ATC and a number of cadets have been awarded "blues (a badge) for coming in the top three. Cadets have taken part in the bronze D of E, training weekends and fundraising activities.

20 cadets have been accepted onto various camps being run by the Royal Air Force over the summer period, giving them a good insight into military life and the social and sporting events in which the RAF participates.

The Squadron held a camp in January 2014 which was very well attended, and this will be repeated this Autumn.

The Squadron went on a successful trip to France and Belgium in 2013 to some First World War battlefields, to pay their respects.

2. Achievements

Cadet Warrant Officer Alastair Fielding is coming to the end of his term in office (April) as the Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for Greater Manchester and has been nominated by the Wing to be the National Cadet of the Year for the ATC (Dacre Sword nominee), as well as being recommend for a Commission in the Royal Air Force Reserve.

Two cadets who have been promoted to Adult Sergeant: Charlotte Bailey and Hallam O'Shea.

Cadet Costagliola Ray recently completed a free RAF Flying Scholarship and qualified as a pilot. Earning his pilot wings, he really is a credit to the Squadron, and was recently given a merit promotion to Cadet Sergeant.

16 cadets currently hold a Duke of Edinburgh award. With a further 14 only needing to complete their final 2 day expedition to be given their Bronze Certificate, we have 5 enrolled in the Silver award, and 4 undertaking the Gold award.

9 cadets recently completed the BTec in Public Services, which equates to 4x A levels, and is accredited and accepted towards further education as UCAS points for those concerned.

The Squadron continues to support as many community events as we can for Poynton whenever possible, and will do so in the future. The ATC requests at least 5 weeks' notice so that health and safety reports can be prepared and insurance approved, which means that requests need to be submitted to Wing HQ at least 4 weeks before any event.

3. Administration

Civ Inst Alan Rashleigh has left the Squadron as a CI and has taken up the duties of Squadron Chaplain, Alan has for many years been a lay preacher with Poynton's Methodist church, and he is a great friend of the Squadron.

A summer ball will be held in the near future to dine out for our former CO John Morten and presentations.

Poynton Squadron 2448 has 42 Cadets ranging from 14 – 20 years, 1 Officer, 3 NCO's and 4 Civilian Instructors as of March 2014. Sadly we will be losing a large number of our older cadets in September as they have been accepted for places at various universities, which is very commendable.

The Squadron enjoys great support from the Civilian Committee run by Mr Len Davies.

Poynton - with - Worth Almshouse Charity

Town Council representative: Cllr Charles Gorst

The six Poynton Almshouses were erected in 1854 originally for the occupation of aged and deserving colliers and other workmen on the Vernon Estate. In 1958 they were transferred into a newly-created Poynton Almshouse Trust.

The Trust has five Trustees who manage the day to day running of the charity, together with the ongoing maintenance of the properties.

In accordance with the provisions of the Trust, the residents should be poor persons who are inhabitants of the Parish of Poynton with Worth and who contribute a weekly sum towards the cost of maintaining the almshouses and essential services. This weekly sum is reviewed annually.

All the Almshouses are currently occupied and are maintained to a good standard. The Trust is in a financially strong position and has built up adequate reserves to carry out major repairs, cyclical repairs and maintenance on housing properties.

Parish Plan Group

Town Council representative: Cllr Mr M J Beanland

The Parish Plan team 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.

1. Christmas Fest

The Parish Plan group is a voluntary body supported by Poynton Town Council. Meetings are held monthly, but more frequently in the last quarter of the year in preparation for our Christmas Fest. Poynton held its seventh Christmas Fest in December 2013, with generous support from the Town Council. Once again it proved to be a highly popular community celebration in the village calendar that enjoys massive support from residents, friends and visitors, many of whom regard the Fest as the start of the festive season. The weather was especially mild this year and the people attending were very appreciative. Shopkeepers on Park Lane are very supportive of the event with many remaining open to celebrate the Christmas atmosphere. Launched with a rousing peal of bells courtesy of the St George bell ringers, the Fest took place on Tuesday evening 3rd December. The crowds were treated to street musicians and performers keen to return to such a friendly and community driven event and who all spoke fondly of the conviviality and friendliness to be found in Poynton. Also in attendance were the ever-popular stilt walkers, a children's roundabout (thanks to the Farmers Arms their support), and carol singing led by the St George's Singers ably assisted by the MAPS choir, members of the St George's choir and some Male Voice Choir members. Once again a superb firework display was held thanks to the cooperation of United Utilities. Local radio station Silk FM worked

tirelessly on Park Lane throughout the evening. Support from the major stores on Park Lane continues and Poynton High School were again in evidence on the outdoor terrace of the Tarantella which accommodated several performance activities.

The Parish Plan team wish to continue to be involved with the Fest, and would welcome any residents who feel they can help with the organisation of this popular and well-supported event. The popularity of the Fest has increased over the years and we are always supportive of local charities who wish to advertise themselves and have a stall at the event. It is felt that volunteers are needed, not only for Fest focus, but for all local community areas of interest, and in particular from businesses who enjoy the financial benefits of this event.

Cheshire East's involvement is acknowledged as Diane Smith, Cheshire East Town Centres Manager works tirelessly to provide equipment, assistance with administration, street closure notices, and planning for the event. Her efforts are essential to the event's success. This is a community event we can all be proud to support. Come along to the next event on the first Tuesday in December 2014 and meet your friends to start the Christmas season in style.

2. Parish Plan Reorganisation

The Parish Plan Team completed a review of its purpose and considered its role in future activities around the village. It works to secure resources for any organisation or individual that can provide benefit for the community. To this end we have worked with the Town Council to support applications for funding on several projects some of which are successful. We hope to continue to work with anyone who has a good idea from which we can all benefit. The team would be glad to hear from businesses and the churches who may wish to join the team. The areas we wish to consider include:

Cultural events

Recreation / tourism

Road safety

Litter

Landscape / floral

Open Space enhancements (e.g. footpaths and areas not already being addressed by other groups).

Community life

Community events

3. Family Fun Day

The event was held on the 29th June 2013. It was again a successful day. It took place at the Leisure Centre and much activity was seen on the day. The legacy fund, which is seeking funds to support future sporting causes in the village, now

stands at £850. There will be another event on 28th June this year, and please see local press and the PUN for details.

4. Higher Poynton Summerfest

The small but enthusiastic band of volunteers that make up the Friends of Higher Poynton Summerfest worked hard to deliver a brilliant event in mid-July 2013, and memories of the last minute cancellation of the previous year's event, due to bad weather, was long forgotten on the day. Remember to bring the family this year, on Sunday 13th July, for more of the same fun and excitement. The Summerfest carries a small surplus to help sustain the event in future years, but still relies at present on the generous support from its main sponsor, the Town Council.

5. Drug Proof Your Kids (DPKY)

This continues to be a successful course that was initiated through the Parish Plan Group and supported by a grant from Poynton Town Council, which provided the essential finance for the initial training of the course leaders. The DPYK course is implemented by the Churches Together in Poynton and is run over 6 weeks (one 2 hour session per week), usually twice a year to 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. It looks at ways of communicating better, setting boundaries, creating networks, where to get support and help when things go wrong, and learning some great strategies for successful parenting. The course has run since September 2006, with annual courses completed, and has reached over 200 adults to date.

The course has been run at the High School, which provided a room and facilities and has previously provided financial support (but this has now ceased). Parish Plan Dave Dyball is part of the DPYK core team that organise the course, acting as treasurer/secretary, managing all the finances, registration and record keeping.

6. Poynton in Bloom

Increased numbers have come forward to be involved in PIB to decorate the village with tubs and baskets. The Town Council have given financial support where Cheshire East have withdrawn funding for the provision of hanging baskets. There were many baskets placed throughout the village to give a floral aspect to the streets. If you can assist this year please contact the Parish Plan Team.

7. Finances

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

8. Conclusion

The Chairman and members of the Parish Plan have identified the need for a "Clear Vision" for the future, and is revisiting the remit of the Parish Plan Team. The Parish Plan's membership also needs to expand to fully embrace community aspirations, but continues to be both enthusiastic and optimistic about Poynton's future.

Poynton In Bloom

Town Council representatives: Councillors Mrs S Horsman and Ms R Horsman

Chairman of Poynton In Bloom: David Hetherington

Alan Walker was acting Chairman, and has now handed over to David Hetherington. The Poynton in Bloom group comprises some 20 hard-working volunteers whose aim is to enhance the village by making it a colourful, cheerful place to live, visit and in which to shop. All through last year and at the start of this Poynton in Bloom helpers have been busy planting bulbs, planters, baskets, tubs and of course the iconic Victoria Fountain with an exciting array of plants. Maintaining and watering is also a time-consuming job for Poynton in Bloom, and they deserve our thanks for this task too.

The successful Garden Safaris organised by Poynton in Bloom have been held for the last 8 years, whereby a number of private Poynton gardens have been opened to the public to raise money for local charities. The impressive sum of £6,850 has been raised and distributed to date.

Plans are again underway to make Poynton stand out, and with the help of the Town Council and other organisations in the village the group hopes to raise sufficient funds to put these plans into action. If anyone would like to help Poynton in Bloom in their valuable community work they would be delighted to hear from you.

Twining Association of Poynton (TAP)

Town Council representative: Cllr Gabor Bartos (until November 2013)

Our 10th anniversary year began with a fund-raising coffee morning at the home of Mrs Rowe which was very successful, both financially and socially.

In June 2013 we celebrated the anniversary with a full and interesting weekend of events attended by two members of the Erd Council. They were joined at the civic lunch by our MP, David Rutley, representatives from the Hungarian Embassy and Liverpool Consulate, the then Deputy Leader of Cheshire East, Councillor Wesley Fitzgerald and guest and the Mayor of Poynton, Councillor Gabor Bartos and Mrs Jennifer Bartos, as well as representatives of many Poynton voluntary organisations. We were entertained by Hungarian dancers from Guildford, who also opened Rotary's Party in the Park later in the afternoon. The Gypsy Jays, a professional duo from Poynton, played Hungarian music and Cantata, Annie Mitchell and Catherine Silman sang English folk songs.

The weekend also included a photographic exhibition at the Civic Hall with contributions from both Poynton and Erd Photographic Societies, and an arts and crafts fair at the Community Centre, organised by Suzy and Dave Whitehead and Liz Wade. We are very grateful to them all for their support which raised a substantial amount for TAP's funds.

In September the Mayor led a group from Poynton to Erd.

Our most recent event was the Annual General Meeting at the Hockley Centre when we were again delighted to welcome David Rutley MP, TAP members and guests. Following the business meeting we once again enjoyed the music of the Gypsy Jays and heard from Maggie Martin, a committee member, about her experience of setting up Turner's nursery garden in Alderley Edge. Maggie makes it her responsibility to plant up the TAP trough at the Woodford boundary each season. During the evening we also showed a filmed account of the anniversary celebrations, made by the Stockport Film Society.

The Twining Committee has met regularly throughout the year. Following the resignation of Councillor Bartos, John Jurics agreed to become the Vice-Chairman, Suzanne Beanland is now the Treasurer and Judith Jurics the Membership Secretary. Other Committee members are Councillor Mike Beanland, Eva Hamilton-Fisher, and Margaret Martin. We always welcome new members and ideas for additional twinning opportunities for Poynton residents. We would especially welcome more exchange visits between Poynton and Erd residents.

Finally we would like to record our thanks to the Town Council for their continued support, which is much appreciated.