Thank you Madam Mayor for the opportunity to report to the Council the latest developments on various matters relating to the Rochdale Township Committee.

Rochdale Town Centre

Town Centre East (Genr8)
The Development Agreement between Council and the development partner (Genr8) was signed in September 2013. The vast majority of the site has been assembled and demolitions and site clearance is substantially complete. Genr8 are continuing their negotiations to secure key retail & leisure occupiers to anchor the new development. Genr8 are making good progress with these commercial negotiations and it is hoped to make formal announcements in the near future.

The developer is continuing to progress the design and layout of the preferred scheme. Genr8’s planning advisors have worked with the Council and RDA to prepare a Development Framework, as a replacement to the submission of an outline planning application. The Development Framework will guide the future design of the scheme by establishing criteria and detailed design principles which will influence the scope of the detailed planning application. Consultation on the Development Framework and the emerging proposals took place during February and the comments received were used to help shape the content of the Development Framework. The document was formally endorsed by the Council in late March and Genr8 will now progress the scheme design and work towards the submission of a detailed planning application later in 2015.

River reopening project
The Council has been awarded a grant of £1.15m from the Heritage Lottery Fund towards the river reopening project. The contractors have started to uncover the river and reveal the medieval bridge in late March.

A project office has been created within the former Bar 5 building on South Parade, as part of the river re-opening scheme, to provide a base for engagement & community involvement and as a base for the contractor.

Wheatsheaf Centre entrance
A new contractor has now been appointed and work on site is ongoing with the escalators currently being installed. Work is expected to be substantially complete in May 2015. The Baillie Street entrance remains operational with a lift and stair access up to the shops and car park.

Demolitions
The demolition of the multi-story car park/bus station and the former Municipal Office building, along with the demolition of the Broadwater Centre and St Andrews Church is now complete. It is proposed to tender the demolition of Telegraph House during 2015 when the remaining tenant is relocated.

Use of cleared sites
The temporary car park site on the former bus station opened at the end of November, and will remain operational until the new retail and leisure development starts on site. The site of the former Municipal Offices has been laid out as the temporary market. Work has also
completed on the temporary car park on the Broadwater Centre/St Andrews Church site.

**Rochdale Town Hall**
The Council agreed a way forward for the future use of the Town Hall late last year. Since then work has started on a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid.

Essential improvement works have been completed or are underway to support the core events & hospitality business including - Registrar’s mini refurbishment; improvements to the sound system in the Council Chamber; lift mechanism replaced; listed building application submitted for the remodelled and extended bar facilities and new toilets on the 1st floor; new boilers being installed; Magna Carta mural condition survey and trial cleaning; stained glass window repairs and full conditions survey of the roof prepared.

**Shopmobility & Cycle Hub**
Work to construct a new purpose built Shopmobility unit and cycle hub facility on River Street commenced in February and is expected to complete in Spring 2015. The site is located to the rear of Drake Street, immediately adjoining the Transport Interchange and the recently opened River Street taxi rank.

**Market**
The temporary outdoor market on the former Black Box site was established in January 2015.

**M Local - 2 Smith Street**
The new M Local convenience store in the Grade 2 listed building at the corner of Drake Street and Smith Street opened in March 2015. The new Java Bar Coffee shop is also now open in the Transport Interchange.

**Kingsway Business Park**
The planning application for the new premises for local technology company, Wireless CCTV was approved in March and construction is expected to start in April. RDA and the Business Growth Hub have also assisted the company to secure a grant towards their Research and Development for new products.

Planning consent has also been granted for a major 210,000 sq ft unit on Kingsway (Plot H). Wilson Bowden has identified an investment partner to enable this scheme to be rapidly developed on a speculative basis.

The expansion of JD Sports continues apace, with the internal expansion of the current facility to over 1m sq ft. We have worked with the Kingsway Partnership to secure the opportunity for JD Sports to expand further and make Kingsway their European Distribution Hub.

In mid-February, Source Bioscience unveiled their state-of-the-art Blood and Tissue Serology manufacturing facility at its premises on Kingsway (Plot E).

Planning approval is expected in early April for a further 68 houses by David Wilson Homes located between the Hornet Pub and their existing development. Strong sales levels are being achieved, with 92 units sold and a further 9 reserved.

In response to public requests, a previously blocked-off footpath at Stanney Brook was reopened in January for walkers to use. A series of walking guides are currently in preparation which will be made available to businesses and residents.

The total number of jobs on Kingsway averages between 1000 and a peak of 2000 and a large proportion have been taken by borough residents. The number of people using the Kingsway Metrolink Stop reached nearly 8,000 in December whilst the number of journeys on the Kingsway Link Bus has risen to over 1800 per month.
**Street Lighting PFI**
The street lighting replacement programme is now into the fourth year of a five year programme. All wards have had a percentage of columns replaced and will be subject to further replacement phases. To date 19,213 existing street lights have been removed and 19,391 new energy efficient street lights have been installed and commissioned.

Street lighting faults are being repaired in an average time of 3 working days. This excludes faults associated with supply failures, which are referred to Electricity North West for repair.

**Community Safety**
The Community Safety Service have been extremely busy tackling anti – social behaviour on the transport networks within the Township predominately caused by a gang known as the T/C (Triple Cash) gang. They cause disruption to the Metrolink network especially at Kingsway Business Park, Newbold and Rochdale Town Centre. This problem also spills onto the new transport interchange in the Town Centre. These issues have an extremely negative effect on the travelling public and give them the sense of vulnerability whilst using public transport. A multi-agency approach has been implemented to tackle the issues presented by the T/C GANG involving Rochdale BC, TfGM, Metrolink and Greater Manchester Police. A dispersal zone has been implemented which has resulted in the Police being able to move this gang on. Should they return within a specified period they then get arrested. Numerous arrests have been made and major progress has been made tackling this issue.

Work has been carried out around the Rochdale Township to identify the users on “mini moto’s” and “off road bike” on land types such as parks, moorland and housing estates. Once the perpetrators have been identified then Community Safety can look at things such as tenancy warning interviews and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts. Signage has been erected at various locations within the Township.

The usual work within the Township has continued with things such as CCTV installations to tackle various crime types and regular visits to properties within the private rented sector as a result of receiving reports of anti-social behaviour. As a result of this numerous tenancy warning letters have been issued.

Partnership working with Greater Manchester Police has included various initiatives such as “Operation Dark Nights”. This was a campaign to reduce the number of burglaries by raising awareness of not giving thieves the opportunity by leaving lights on in the house, not leaving windows or doors insecure and not leaving valuables on display especially around Christmas time.

**Youth Services**
Young people from the Rochdale area have been involved in various projects over the last quarter.

Young women from across the borough came together to celebrate International Women’s Day at Springvale for an evening of arts and craft and socialising. The young women from Sparth and Central were also involved in the Attitudes Project which was delivered in conjunction with Cartwheel Arts and Contact Theatre. The project looked at gender roles and attitudes towards them. The young people from Sparth worked with Rap artists and created a rhyming piece and those from Central worked with a poet and produced several poems. This was a fantastic project which culminated in performances at Contact Youth Theatre in Manchester.

The Matthew Moss Youth Group has been involved in a health and well-being project where they used 3D art as a medium to produce a scaled piece of Springfield Park.
Following this an ‘inspiring health conference’ was held at Number One Riverside.

The Youth Workers will continue to deliver sessions over the school holidays which will include; rambling in Healey Dell, basketball, kerby and quick cricket.

**Area Forums**
The final rounds of forums for the current year are taking place.

To date the issues raised so far include:

**Balderstone and Kirkholt Community Meeting**
RBH were in attendance and provided an insight into some of the agreed/proposed developments in Kirkholt. Environment issues were raised including problems with litter and fly-tipping. Residents were also concerned about off road biking and residents were encouraged to contact 101 with information. The police held their PACT meeting setting the quarterly PACT priorities which included tackling anti-social behaviour.

**Bamford and Oakenrod Area Forum**
Investigatory work is ongoing around the land sale off Swift Lane; residents at the forum discussed the proposals that have been put forward. Other issues raised included additional street lighting and highways schemes; Norden Road Pedestrian Crossing and 20mph Zone.

**Castleton Area Forum**
Castleton held its annual general meeting, selecting a new chair and vice chair for 2015/16. The Head of Planning was in attendance to inform the forum of various planning opportunities within Castleton. Residents were also invited to view the newly refurbished World War One memorial at St. Martin’s Church.

**Central Rochdale Area Forum**
The police held their PACT meeting setting their quarterly priorities which included additional patrols of Ramsey Street, the continued engagement of youths near the Shell Petrol Station and off road biking. Residents raised a number of environmental concerns relating to waste collection. Projects supported from Wards Funds in recent months include the additional placement of bollards on Edward Street and the installation of a sensory garden at Howard Street Nursery School. The forum was informed that a recent successful litter pick / clean-up was held in the Ward.

**Healey Area Forum**
Healey held its annual general meeting and informed members that Syke Base would close from Tuesday 31\textsuperscript{st} March 2015 and will be relocating to Syke Chapel. Concerns were raised in relation to ongoing issues about vehicles damaging the common and dog fouling in the Ward.

**Kingsway Area Forum**
The ward is experiencing ongoing environment issues. Fly-tipping is an ongoing issue and it was advised that items are being removed when they are reported. Discussions were held around a community approach to address some of the issues. Other items discussed included lighting and highway schemes.

**Milkstone and Deeplish Area Forum**
Representatives from the National Grid attended the meeting to inform the forum of the progress that had been made regarding the demolition of the three gasholders in the Ward. Residents raised a number of concerns about the ongoing traffic/congestion problems being experienced around Milkstone Road/Tweedale Street.
Spotland and Falinge Area Forum
Environmental issues were raised and the forum was keen for the council to look into saving green open spaces. Discussions were also held around the development of additional wind farms at Rolley Moor Road particularly around potential traffic problems. Residents were reminded that they can submit their comments in relation to the planning application.

Norden Area Forum
Following the last meeting, updates were provided around community responses to proposed planning developments in/affecting the ward. The chair provided an overview of ward expenditure, highlighting in particular the scheme implemented at Hutchinson Road which has been well received. Residents were also encouraged to support the development of a village plan which is currently being drafted.

Sparth Area Forum
The Sparth Forum received a presentation which provided an update on the demolition of the three gasholders within the ward. A lengthy and detailed discussion took place about the double yellow lines that were introduced on Manchester Road some time ago and the problems being experienced by residents. The forum was keen to set up an Environmental Group to focus on the many environmental issues within the ward. It was also reported that a Community Speedwatch exercise had recently been completed by residents along Norman Road and surrounding area. Although this exercise could not carry out enforcement it brought to light numerous incidents of speeding, mobile phone use whilst driving and drivers not wearing seat belts. Concerns were also raised about the approach taken by Eon when replacing lighting columns. The forum was also informed that a number of projects which originated at the forum have been completed, for example pot holes on Norman Road and the siting of an additional grit bin.

I thank all Members and officers for their continuing support.

Councillor Sultan Ali
Chair – Rochdale Township Committee
April 2015

Thank you Madam Mayor. I will be pleased to answer any questions from Members of the Council about these or any other matters relating to the Rochdale Township Committee.