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

**Highways**

The Highways Service has agreed the capital programme for 2015/16 and will complete all outstanding work on the Highway Investment Programme (HIP) by the end of March 2015. These schemes will deliver improved traffic flow through the Pennines villages. We are continuing with the Elizabethan Way Cycle scheme and signalisation with an expected completion date of March 2015.

**Library Service**

Libraries are being well used across the Pennines Township, particularly to support customers in the following priority areas: Health and Wellbeing; skills, jobs and business support; reading and literacy; digital inclusion; early years and stronger families; preventing social isolation – particularly with the elderly. Every library in the Township now offers free Wi-Fi, as well as free Internet access. On February 28th, the first Rochdale Digital Festival was held at Rochdale Central Library. This event, designed to improve people's ICT skills, was attended by nearly 100 people from the Pennines Township. The festival also saw the launch of a new eBooks service – eBooks are now available to borrow from all Pennines Libraries. The Books on Prescription Dementia List was launched in February. The books, which are proven to help people with dementia and their carers, can be borrowed from every library in the Pennines. Smallbridge Library is used by Youth Services to reduce anti-social behaviour in the area, there are 2 well attended youth sessions held outside of usual library opening hours.

**Youth Service**

Youth Service has started the year in the Pennines concentrating on health and well-being. Two groups have participated in arts projects connected to health and their work has been displayed in Number One Riverside on Friday 13th March at the Health and Arts Conference which some of the Pennines young people attended. Young people have also attended sessions on alcohol and drug awareness, First Aid, healthy relationships and the benefits of stopping smoking. 20 young people from the Pennines spent 3 days during February half term at Kingswood Residential Centre in the Dearne Valley. They participated in workshops and completed presentations about some of the issues that they are concerned about in the Pennines. This work is in preparation for the next Pennines Question Event which is due to be held later in the year.
Football appears to be important to young men in the Pennines and we have given them the opportunity to access football sessions at Wardle Academy on Thursday evenings at 6pm until 8pm, at Littleborough Sports Centre on Friday evenings 6pm until 8pm and through a monthly tournament at the Soccer Village on a Saturday.

Detached work continues in the Pennines at the ‘Hot Spot’ areas and the Mobile Bus Facility is still in the area two evenings per week in addition to the usual youth club sessions.

During the next quarter we are going to be looking at the environment, mental health and men’s health.

**Community Safety**

We have been working on the Henderson / Smallbridge Estate project. Fencing, part funded by Pennines Township, is going to be strategically placed around the area to reduce criminal activity and anti-social behaviour. The project will be completed by the end of March. Work has been carried out on the Stansfield Estate in Littleborough to identify the users on “mini motos” and “off road bikes” on the estate. Once the perpetrators have been identified, Community Safety can then pursue tenancy warning interviews and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts. We will also be putting additional signage up in the area. The usual work within the Pennines has continued: CCTV installations to tackle various crime types and regular visits to properties within the private rented sector to address reports of anti-social behaviour. As a result, numerous tenancy warning letters have been issued.

We have also worked in Partnership with Greater Manchester Police on various initiatives such as “Operation Dark Nights”. This campaign aimed to reduce the number of burglaries by raising awareness and not giving thieves opportunities by leaving lights on in the house, securing windows and doors and not leaving valuables on display especially around Christmas time.

**Community News**

**Pacts and Community Meetings**

Discussions have recently taken place between Pennines Councillors, Township Officers and GMP to look at how we can engage better with our local communities, as a result new partnership meetings will be arranged across the Township that will include the Police, Council, Rochdale Boroughwide Agency and other agencies. Local policing priorities will be set at these meetings to allow the Police to better address local issues.

**Milnrow and Newhey Area Forum**

The forum continues to address local issues raised by the community. The meetings are advertised using social media and the press to invite anyone working or living in the area to attend to raise issues affecting them and also to find out what is happening in their local area.

**Milnrow Library**

Progress is being made with regards to enabling access to the upstairs room at Milnrow Library. An initial meeting has taken place with English Heritage who were impressed with the upstairs area and now, having seen the potential of the space, understand the importance of it being available for use by the Library and others.

**Wardle Football Club**

During a recent condition survey the club house was deemed beyond repair and condemned. As a result the club have recently received a grant from Pennine Township; the grant will ultimately enable the club to continue playing adult matches at Rutherford Park from next season. The Club are working hard to ensure grassroots football remains a local facility that is accessible to everyone.

**Littleborough**

A grant from Pennines Township has recently been awarded to Littleborough Library; they
are holding arts and crafts events during Easter and also with the help of the grant are now able to set up games clubs at the Library.

**Pennines Events Calendar**
The calendar has been revised and improved and the first edition has been published in time for events happening in April. A great deal of work gone into updating and including as much information as possible. We hope the calendar will once again prove to be a popular and useful publication.

Councillor Hussain
Pennines Township Chair

*Thank you Madam Mayor, I will be pleased to answer any questions from Members of the Council about these or any other matter relating to the Pennines Township*