

A TOWN councillor who once cycled to Paris to raise funds for charity is to be Rhyl's next mayor.

Cllr Alan James, who cycled to the French capital from London to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Support, will be investing his energies in helping the town over the next 12 months.

Macmillan will also be one of the new mayor's two chosen charities this year with the other being Rhyl's Foryd Centre on Wellington Road.

Cllr James – a town councillor since 2012 and a member of Denbighshire County Council since 2016 – said the focus of his year would be inclusion and community.

A retired social worker specialising in children and mental health, Cllr James, who represents the Foryd ward on town council, Rhyl West on the county council and has lived in Rhyl since 1984, said: "In the five years I have been a councillor I have seen, and played a part, in the changes taking place in Rhyl. Regeneration is happening all around us – Marina Quay is just a few months away from opening, our theatre is being revamped along with other changes on the seafront and plans submitted for the exciting new waterpark.

"Over the next 12 months, I will be looking to further raise the profile of Rhyl, working with colleagues to ensure the regeneration continues and engaging with the communities and people of Rhyl to meet their needs and interests."

One of those groups being championed by Cllr James during his mayoral year is the Foryd Centre.

"The Foryd Centre is in my ward and a lifeline for many. It is a place where people can visit for housing and job seekers' advice and to gain new skills. It is a valuable town asset and I am glad it will be supported further during my time as mayor," he added.

A keen railway enthusiast, Cllr James and wife Win, who is also a Rhyl town councillor and will be mayoress, run *Rails in Wales*, an annual rail and model exhibition in the town. Cllr James, a marathon runner, is also a Rhyl in Bloom committee member, a member of Rhyl Miniature Railway and volunteers at town events including the air show and Race for Life.

Rhyl's deputy mayor for the coming year will be Cllr Peter Prendergast and the mayor's chaplain will be Rev Andy Grimwood.

Ends

