



# Oundle Town Council

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## **Report on the Annual Town Meeting May 27<sup>th</sup> 2021 at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Cllrs I Clark, V Chesser, P Davis, L Jones and D Chapple

**Present:** 4 members of the public

Apologies were received from: Cllrs D Fuller, J Hutton and P King

An unusual Annual Town meeting was held in Fletton House with some residents present, and others hoping to join on Zoom, which unfortunately let us down. However, the meeting was videoed, and can be watched via the OTC site and YouTube Channel, along with the full text of the meeting (précised below) and presentation.

Key points raised were -

- 1) Introduction to the councillors** and staff for the new 2021 OTC, and thanks to retiring councillors. "A couple of us live in what might be called North Oundle, a couple in East and a couple in West - our contact details are available on the OTC website – do look there for any council information you want and need, and make contact if you can't find what you want.
- 2) Finances** – figures from the Annual Internal Audit Report (done by ironically an external body, Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils) were shared.

	<b>Year ending 31 March 2020</b>	<b>Year ending 31 March 2021</b>
1. Balances brought forward	363,201	386,057
2. Annual precept	459,985	494,506
3. Total other receipts	194,570	165,415
4. Staff costs	265,628	242,115
5. Loan interest/capital repayments	22,793	22,793
6. Total other payments	343,278	428,830
7. Balances carried forward	386,057	352,240
8. Total cash and investments	388,000	483,965
9. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	2,574,788	2,657,837
10. Total borrowings	423,746	419,509

- Financially good health with reserves of c.£350k
- Precept – the amount OTC gets from your Council Tax - increased in 2021 in line with expectation of adopting more services from NCC – and zero increase 21-22.
- Hub closure and covid explain drops in income (FH, QVH, market etc) and costs
- Capital projects/unusual expenditure explain larger than normal “other payments” – skatepark, boardwalk, cycleway, new van, grants for laptops. Our assets value has risen accordingly.
- Clean bill of health from NCALC Auditor – “I am pleased to advise the Town Council that I do not have any issues or comments to raise and that I have found all satisfactory. I would like to congratulate Mrs Baker and her team for the excellent way in which the council has been managed during such a difficult year.”
- A reminder - we as councillors are not paid, we are all of us here as volunteers.

### 3) OTC Ambitions for the year

Clearly 2021-22 will be a tough year for Oundle as Covid retreats or not. It seems that we have three areas as a Council that we can work hard at this year in order to keep things improving

- a) **Environmental** – Oundle is a great place to live, and we want to keep it that way. Through the work of our Planning and Estates Committees we will do everything we can to ensure you have access to as much open and green space as we can make or keep. Clearly planning has been a big issue in the past year or three, and no doubt will continue to be so in the future. The baton for statutory responsibility has now passed from ENC and NCC to NNC, and we’ll continue to represent the views of the residents of Oundle to NNC as well as we can. Mention of skatepark, cycleways, Footpath and Snipe Meadow wardens, Transport study, Fletton Field, and wildflowers. **Note** – an important question was asked by a resident about planning – see Cllr Chapple’s answer on the video.



### b) **Communication** -

- Communication with residents – please make active use of our website; subscribe to Twitter feed, Facebook page and read the Advertiser – monthly pages going to every door in Oundle.



- New signs going up this summer.
- Communications with neighbouring parishes in the “hinterland” of Oundle through our Rural Forum - we hope to include our neighbours in the Transport Study.
- Communications with NNC – we’re lucky that one of Oundle’s North Northants ward councillors, Jason Smithers, is leader of NNC. How we work with NNC, who hold most statutory power is very important, and we hope that Jason will ensure Oundle’s voice is heard.

c) **Helping Oundle’s future after Covid** – working with OBA to keep the town economically flourishing – loveOundle.org, markets. Working with NNC on same. Finding a way to recognise local heroes and Creative Oundle - do look at the Creative Oundle website. New functions for the Hub space to support local groups

#### 4) Love Oundle website

OTC has worked with the Oundle Business Association to upgrade the Oundle.info website. The new website is now called Love Oundle.

#### 5) Questions

A question regarding the concern for Oundle as it has no defence for future development in the town since the Neighbourhood Plan had failed, was raised and what was OTC going to do about it. OTC was very sympathetic to the concerns and would continue to object to the potential development of 600 new homes in Oundle and the effect it would have on the infrastructure.

The meeting ended with a video of Oundle that can be viewed on [www.loveoundle.org](http://www.loveoundle.org).