

Tuesday

CWP and Trans

OTC ATM – CAN WE SHOW POWERPOINT ON VIDEO??

1 Welcome and Introductions from the New Councillors of Oundle Town Council.

Welcome to an unusual Annual Town meeting. Clearly we'd much rather do this in front of a bigger group of residents, but the current stage of the covid roadmap precludes large indoor gatherings, and the weather doesn't necessarily support an outdoor meeting and recording! Doing a fully online meeting would have also have been an idea but the recent changes in legislation on May 7th preclude that too – so we have an unusual hybrid. We intend to hold an “extraordinary” town meeting later in the year when we're more able, and will of course keep you, the residents of Oundle, informed.

First things first – as of last week, we have a new council, with 5 councillors from last time and 5 new councillors, some experienced, some fresh to the role. It is important that the council represents Oundle as a community, and the closer we get to the demographic profile of Oundle the better.

I'm going to ask each of us to spend a short time “on camera” now, to introduce themselves to you, if only so you know who we are as you go around town. A couple of us live in what might be called North Oundle, a couple in East and a couple in West, so if you see us around, do say hi. All our contact details are available on the OTC website – and do look there for any council information you want and need, and make contact if you can't find what you want.

Whilst I'm here.....2-3 years, a whole week as mayor now.....resident for 30 years. Work at OS. Eco minded.

David Chapple – Deputy Mayor

Val Chesser

Paul Davis

David Fuller – apologies – long term resident and long standing councillor. IT flair, Flood Warden and Police Liaison.

Liz Holland

Jerry Hutton – apologies – TO, has been Mayor, crucial to financial prudence and success of the council, for which he has all our thanks!

Luke Jones

Paul King – apologies – on call – previous councillor and I believe mayor – great to have some fresh experience back.

Rupert Reichhold – by Zoom (technical problems at OTC prevented)

It's also an important chance to publicly thank all those from the old council who have taken a break – Malcolm Glenn, Clive Humphreys, Peter Peel, Tony Robinson, and Roy Sparkesall worked tirelessly over the last few years on a number of really challenging initiatives, and all put in what they call in Australia “some hard yards”!

And a chance to welcome one of our unitary authority councillors, Helen Harrison – say a few words and congrats? (technical problems at OTC prevented)

I'd also like to introduce the OTC staff - see slides.

2. **End of year Finance for 2020 - 2021** – the figures on the screen are all from the Annual Internal Audit Report which is done by ironically an external body, Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils.

	Year ending 31 March 2020	Year ending 31 March 2021
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 line with expectation of adopting more services from NCC – and zero up this year.
- Hub closure and covid explain drops in income (FH, QVH, market etc) and costs
- Capital projects and unusual expenditure explain some oddities such as the larger than normal “other payments” – skatepark, boardwalk, cycleway, new van, grants to schools for laptops – but then 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 – occasionally one sees on social media about councillors “taking their allowances”, but in Oundle’s case, we get no payment, all our time is given for the benefit of Oundle.

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 –

- a. Oundle is a great place to live, and we want to keep it that way.
- b. 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. Investment in Snipe Meadow and benches in the cemetery point to this, and both made heavy use of recycled plastic, reducing maintenance costs for the future as well as keeping plastic out of landfill.
- c. 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.
- d. Skatepark – a good example of encouraging “wellbeing” across a whole set of ages, and we will keep developing as funds allow, especially the surface, and we’re paying attention to the basketball court too – both of these have involved residents, users, so do please be actively involved in this, your council.
- e. We’ll promote cycling (Glaphorn/Creed Road cycleway, Transition Oundle), EV use (South Road, next van etc) and of course walking - to help with this, we’ve elected a Footpath Warden, Tony Hoyle ((technical problems at OTC prevented), who has asked us to say “Tony Hoyle is pleased to have been appointed as the Oundle **Parish Path Warden** for the ten public rights of way that lie within the parish boundary. He is waiting for North Northamptonshire Council to provide the information and guidance applicable to the new scheme.”

- f. We also know that there are tensions when cyclists pedestrians and vehicles have conflicting demands, so are looking to generate a Transport (not just traffic) study this year.
- g. working with groups such as Transition Oundle who are willing and able to support the Council with it's environmental agenda and is ready to provide a summary of the reports prepared by the Climate Change Committee with suggestions for OTC, and NNC, to help in reducing carbon footprints.
- h. Fletton Field – see Tony's bit on **Fletton Field** ((technical problems at OTC prevented): The campaign to save Fletton Field has been re-invigorated under the banners of Transition Oundle and Blooming Oundle. Fletton Field and the Recreation Ground are the only two green spaces in the town that are freely accessible to the public. The aim is to persuade North Northamptonshire Council that:
 - Fletton Field belongs to Oundle
 - it should be used as a managed green space with a variety of outdoor activities for local people to enjoy and benefit from
 - it should not be sold for development.
 - As many people as possible are encouraged to visit the Field, have a look at the website <https://www.saveflettonfield.org.uk/>, and send comments and messages of support by email to: fletton.field@gmail.com.
 - The Council has supported the campaign previously and I am sure will continue to do so.
- i. Snipe meadow management – working with BNC (?) Wildlife Trust, with some ambitious aims along the riverside and working with other landowners – Snipe Meadow is an incredibly rare parcel of land, 98% of similar land has now gone in the UK but recent counts here show 30+ birds down there. Open area up to usage BUT protect what we have. 2 Snipe Meadow Wardens.
- j. Wildflower – see Advertiser; Bloomin Oundle, verges, cemetery,

b. Communication – why I joined the council!

- a. Communication with **residents** –
 - i. Please make active use of our website,

- ii. Please subscribe to Twitter feed, Facebook page – should we have an Instagram page?
 - iii. Please read the Advertiser – monthly pages going to every door in Oundle – tell you what we’ve been doing and will be doing – please look out, and tell us what you want.
 - iv. Oracle – like an annual review?
 - v. Signs showing which land is ours and by exclusion which land is not.
 - vi. A good example of “communicating” with residents would be the wall in St Peters (updates on the ENBs and OTC feeds) and the path from Cricketers Way – NNC planning Section 278 or Section 38 – we should of encourage them to sign and update.
- b. Communications with **neighbouring parishes** in the “hinterland” of Oundle – our newly formed Rural Forum will help with that, and we hope to include our neighbours in the Transport Study. Thanks to David Chapple and Peter Peel for all their work getting the Forum off the ground.
- c. Communications with **NNC** – we’re lucky that one of the North Northants (?) councillors for Oundle, Jason Smithers, is now leader of NNC and we hope that will help Oundle’s voice be heard. How we work with NNC who hold much of the statutory power is **very** important.

c. Helping Oundle’s future after Covid –

- a. working with OBA to keep the town economically flourishing – loveOundle – which I hope to touch on at the end, but is an excellent example of a local project.
- b. working with NNC on same – Welcome Back fund, all of using FixmyStreet to get potholes sorted quickly and hopefully effectively; working collaboratively with our NNC councillors, like Helen, to get the best for Oundle and the parishes around it
- c. Market, Farmers Market,
- d. Finding a way to recognise local heroes like Hermes delivery agent Cathy Weedon and all our retail staff who kept Oundle open over the last year or more

- e. Creative Oundle - supporting Food Festival with the offer of free use of QVH for 2021 (in theory!) – do look at the Creative Oundle website
- f. New functions for the Hub space to support local groups
- g. transport survey looking at future issues and solutions.

5. **Questions from residents** – CAN WE DO THIS BEFORE loveOundle?? SEE BELOW? No zoom questions due technical problems at OTC prevented, but one from the floor. Answered mainly by Cllr Chapple re planning.

Sum up – it feels like an exciting time for Oundle – as the town inevitably grows, we all need to work hard to keep what it is about living here that is important. I would ask all of us to keep being good neighbours, considerate and steady road users, loyal customers of local businesses, regular pothole reporters on FixmyStreet etc!!

Do keep in contact with us via Oundle Town Council posts on social media, the ENBs and in print, meetings etc, and make use of us, your councillors and council staff. We want to help facilitate Oundle being as good a place to live in 10 years as it was 10 years ago, and we all need to work hard to make that happen.....

4. **loveOundle** website inc video -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kz5lQ8nv8bo&t=7s>