

**Minutes of the Otley Chamber of Trade meeting held Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021  
at 6pm via Zoom Video Link**

**Present:** Simon Reybould (Chair) Print Crew  
Trevor Backhouse (OCT Exec) Patisserie Vieonnoise  
Penny Fardell (Treasurer) Holling Crowe Storr  
Elizabeth Fox (Otley Rugby Club)  
Pippa Ridley (Membership Secretary) Etempa  
Andrew Hargreaves (Jnr. Vice President) Westbourne House  
Dawn Hargreaves (COT Social Media) Westbourne House  
Peter Heald (Lund of Otley/OTP)  
Cllr. Richard Hughes Yorkshire Woodwright /Chair OTC  
Paul Mackle (Otley Rugby Club)  
Lynda Phillips (Clinical Hypnotherapy)  
Les Winder (OCT Exec) associated with Cranberry

**Apologies:** P Dawkins (Active Tagging)  
Carole Drake (OCT Minute Secretary)  
Tom Hatley (Christopher Little & Co & Otley BID)  
Victorian Oldham (Cranbourne Accountancy)  
David Pollitt (Barrow & Crowe Accountants & Bus. Advisers)  
Tim & Helen Wilkinson (Dowgill House)

**1. Welcome and introduction of members**

The Chair welcomed all in attendance, followed by attendee's introductions.

**2. President's Report**

Buddying System (businesses buddying with each other to help and support one other).

"When all businesses re-open and are in full swing I intend to go out and visit them and find out how they are doing and getting their feedback."

**3. Presentation from Elizabeth Fox & Paul Mackle from Otley Rugby Club**

"We have come along to give a brief about the re-location plans for Otley Rugby Club. East of Otley is a very big development and we (Otley Rugby Club) are part of it. We are very confident in what we are going to propose is going to be a benefit for the town and the local community and we are quite keen to share these plans with the Chamber to start with. The information we are sharing with you tonight isn't in the public domain, so please don't pass this information on until it can be seen in the public domain.

Paul (who has been instrumental in setting it all up and moving it forward) gave a flavour on how the development came about. "Back in 2014 when the East of Otley started to emerge out of the local plan there became a need to make sure the land to deliver the road was secured and Otley Rugby Club signed an option agreement with Persimmon Homes in 2014, so 6 years ago. We have options subject to planning for a 40 metre strip of land that we own down by the Scouts Centre that cuts through our current training pitches. In return for that 40 metre strip of land we get provided 12-15 acres of new land, construction & payment of four pitches and other facilities to allow the delivery of the road. Delivery of the pitches is

important, relative to where Sport England sit because the pitches down there are low grade as are the North Leeds rugby pitches which are under provided for. Sport England's requirement is to provide when you have a loss of playing fields a better improved quality and a greater number of higher specifications which is in a more sustainable location. This is what the East of Otley is trying to deliver. We expanded our ambition down there by trying to link our new pitches with a club house. In order to facilitate the delivery of that the club house in Cross Green, as it was in a state of disrepair and was not in many respects fit for purpose. The dis-connectivity between our Rugby Pitch for the first team and our juniors and our training pitches leads to an enormous challenge re connectivity and getting a sustainable rugby club. So we sold Cross Green to McCarthy & Stone (nothing to do with EoO relief road) and it will go in for planning (imminently) at the same time as our Club House and pitches with a view, if they all get planning permission Cross Green will be sold and that money will be cross funded into the development of the new club house. The biggest challenge is cutting through the politics in that the land which our new club house and pitches will be on will be to the East of the Relief Road and is very greenbelt, so we have some planning challenges to overcome. These plans will be in the Public Domain in the next three weeks."

Elizabeth then produced some maps to give members an overview of the plans.

"The ideas that Otley Town AFC, Otlensians will become a real sporting hub and area for the town and the community because you will have both of the Otley clubs Rugby & Football and our ambition is this will bring rugby & football together but also to encourage other sports teams in the area to use it as well. One of the things around the local development plan was about increasing the sporting facilities for the town as Otley is wilfully low in terms of sporting facilities. Otley Rugby Club will have four pitches (2 junior pitches) and geographically will join our club back together so this is about uniting the club as well. The clubhouse facility, is deliberately placed that way facing E to W and that is one of the challenges around building on greenbelt in the respect that you have to mitigate the views from the Chevin. Nobody wants to stand on the top of the Chevin looking down the valley and seeing lots of buildings and the fact that E to W will absolutely mitigate those views. Our aim for the clubhouse is to build quite a prestigious development for the town which will not only provide sporting facilities but will also provide off the pitch facilities as well. So the clubhouse will have the ability to house both smaller, but particularly larger events, potentially up to 250 people could hold an event in there. We are building the pitches, clubhouse & changing room to a particular specification that should attract higher prestigious games down the line, which again will bring new people into town, and certainly that is our hope. We are mindful around the environment features so we are looking to achieve in terms of the running and the sustainability of the club house looking to achieve Breeam excellence (accreditation for environmental standards).

Subject to various factors we are considering things such as rainwater harvesting, bore holes so we can irrigate the pitches without using lots of water, solar panels on the roof and a carbon free boiler and ventilation system. So we are looking at a real environmentally friendly project. This needs to be a rugby club that can survive another 150 years and be sustainable.

The floodlights for example will have shields on them to prevent floodlight pollution, so we are very conscious of all that in the design. You may not see a flavour of what it looks like from the drawing, but the stonework will be Yorkshire Stone & charred timber so it will look in keeping with the environment and the design is to look almost like a farmer's barns and it blends in well with the environment and it is not an eyesore."

“In the Neighbourhood Plan they talked about a sporting hub East of Otley and this is the start of that sporting hub. The timescales of the planning application the master plan and the road applications have already been submitted, but they have not been validated yet. Our application for the pitches and the club house and the McCarthy & Stone application on Cross Green they are within days of being submitted - the intention being that all these schemes will go to a planning meeting in August/September when approvals are expected.”

Q. I presume that the Cricket Club is staying where it is?

A. “In the McCarthy & Stone scheme the Cricket Club and the Squash Club will be providing continued enjoyment and access with additional parking spaces for both facilities. At the moment car parking is a problem for both those organisations. The new scheme that McCarthy’s are designing, everyone will be more than satisfied with the provision they get.”

Q. Parking for your new place at East of Otley?

A. “There will be 250 plus car park places, plus disabled, plus electric points.”

Q. Is parking available any time of the day or is it just for a sporting event?

A. “The intention will be that it will be available all times of day (at a £1 per day charge) it will be run professionally - that is the intention at the moment.”

Q. If the car park is full how do you accommodate for an event?

A. “If we have an event that is going to attract up to 250 people then the car park will have restrictions on it.”

Q. One concern is the height of the development, was that addressed?

A. “This has been addressed, this is the third creation. The one we discussed a couple of years ago was the first creation and was 50% higher than the current proposals and this is as low as it can be and designed around the Yorkshire Dales farm type building. It is two storeys high but minimal in height and this reduces the visual impact as you look down from the Chevin.”

Q. The development at Cross Green site has that changed in two years?

A. “Yes that has change as well, the scheme that is coming forward and the previous scheme with the care home on it with 180 units. The current scheme that McCarthy’s are coming forward with has about 85 units consisting of bungalows, 1-2 bed apartments. There is no care home facility, it is principally bungalow or apartment facilities away from the cricket pitch and is a much smaller scheme than the plans of two years ago.”

Q. Previously there was talk about a gym facility, is that still the case?

A. “No that idea has gone. But netball and hockey could be added on down the line.”

## 5. **East of Otley Development update – Les Winder and contribution by Richard Hughes**

First of all I want to run though Pippa’s update. The survey was excellent so I am just going to re-iterate

- i. Relief Road and traffic concerns. In short people want the relief road and they think the reduced traffic (in terms of big Lorries) will be beneficial to the town.
- ii. Employment Land. There is a feeling that we should push for the employment land on the East of Otley Development which I believe is being left till last, and a feeling it could be quietly forgotten.
- iii. Environmental Concerns, including flooding and the increased footfall for businesses. Not only flooding but Green Transport such as cycle lanes and walking routes from the EoO development into town. "I thought Pippa's survey was excellent and I have been in touch with Mick Bradley who is heading up the EoO scheme, but have not had a response yet, but I will continue to follow it up. I think we should ensure that the relief road happens, but probably will happen anyway and ensure the employment land happens and bring it forward to an earlier development phase, plus the environmental agenda which co-insides with micro watch, which includes green routes into Otley from EoO development, cycling and walking, provision for cycle routes on the relief road to make sure it is safe. Concern for flooding issues and seeking possible solutions that work along side the relief road."

"Two things to add to what Les has said: employment land, I do know the agents are looking at enquiring to find out if there are any occupiers out there that would be interested in employment land on the EoO development. It will not be the first thing that will come forward clearly because of the values in the land for housing, but there are moves afoot for the employment land. If there is anybody in the Chamber's business community who are looking for industrial type space, now is the time to start making inroads into that. The second thing about the flooding concern, there is a Flooding Impact Assessment that has been done and I don't believe there was any major concerns that have come out of that. I have not seen sight of it yet but it is winging it's way towards me.

The one issue you did not pick up on is that the whole of the land EoO is allocated for sand and gravel extraction under the Leeds Council Policy. Now there isn't a specific policy with LCC for any extraction of sand & gravel down there and obviously the land is safeguarded for the future, so there is an emerging policy that is being developed around sand & gravel even though the rugby pitch and club houses and road are going to be built on this land that currently has the sand & gravel - that may be something you can capture in your thought process and see if there are any developments on that. The land sand & gravel land extraction moves all the way up to Pool Road as you turn east and that ... into the quarry at the other side of the road."

"I believe it will go ahead because of the commercial interests but just hope it will be well managed."

"Employment Land we have canvassed various people who have an interest and the response has been very positive and should be increased from 5 hectares to 10 hectares – it must go ahead! This has been fed back to Leeds City Council and we have someone there supporting that favourably as having employment land is going to be very positive for the town."

"Recently at the East of Otley Action Group (their first public meeting) there were 60 people who attended which for a meeting of that kind is a very good turnout. 60 out of many thousands of people in Otley and I do meet people in Otley who do not even realise that there is an EoO development happening. Nevertheless 60 is a good number. What came out

of it was the concerns around the gravel extractions, which was talked about quite a lot. The recent research about flooding, is was recognised that there is a flooding pact assessment coming and any general concerns about making sure that the development was very high quality. What I didn't sense was that the EoO Group are not trying to stop the development they just want it to go the right way. Two points which is worth thinking about

1. Because it is such a complex development with so many issues it is quite likely that the normal length of time for responses to consultation may be inadequate, so they were saying as I would say, as Chair of OTC, that one of the first things we need is try and extend that period. I will be writing on behalf of the Town Council and asking for that period to be extended. I have already said that, but I will be saying that again.
2. Whenever we make comments we need to refer to planning documentation so the Local Development Plan or the Neighbourhood Plan and/or any of the documents, any assessments attached to the planning documentation. Finally, although it is significantly delayed it is imminent re the planning application – so watch out for that.”

“One of my concerns and it did not come out of the survey. What I would like to see is that the development becomes of model development as a template for other developments around the Country in terms of the environment and making sure the houses are developed with the best environmental concerns such as energy etc.”

“I think it is important that the Chamber has a voice but that would be about things relative to business in Otley but also as individuals we all have opinions and I think our opinions are largely similar and they are shared across most of the Otley community. We understand that this is happening, we also understand there are benefits but we want it to be the right development and if we all keep saying that and ‘holding their feet to the fire’ we may get what we want. The commercial interest may go against those wishes so the more we can push the better it may be.”

**6. Social Med Report from Dawn Hargreaves**

“I have been smiling at everybody and also making friends with the Chamber of Trade members on Facebook. It has been a steep learning curve but I am getting there and Pippa has been very supportive and she thinks she may have found me some social media training, which I would be very grateful for, not just for my businesses but to better help the Chamber. I have had some nice feedback from lots of people who have liked and shared and I seem to be attracting some attention. I just aim to be myself, just smiley and supportive. I am enjoying it!

**7. Financial Donation in the Chamber of Trade – Simon Reybould**

“A couple of weeks ago the Chair had an email which was very strangely worded, so he rang them up and did some research. So this organisation/member does not want to be named at this point and they are willing to give (if we have a project we would like to do and do not have the funds for) this will be covered in this generous gift – a large amount. So if there is anything, anyone can think of for a Special Project which will help the Chamber, which in turn helps the town then we can put it to these people and see what they have to say. On another matter, to support Otley getting back into business the COT have put £2,000 in the pot to get that project up and running.”

**8. Members' Issues/information**

BID Report – Rachele Aitkin

1. “I’ll be pushing out a communication to let everybody know that the re-start grants are still available to apply for on the Leeds Council website, you can also find the link through the Otley BID’s website.”
2. “One thing we are currently working on at the moment is Otley’s recovery programme along with Visit Otley, OTC, etc. The BID are actually funding 50% of the work that is going into that recovery programme in terms of promoting the town to shoppers and tourists, but apart of that, the BID are also doing a BID carrier bag (this was shown on screen). The BID has produced a carrier bag which is promoting ‘Buy in Otley’ it is going to be fully funded by the BID and is available to all businesses. The businesses can get these for free. With regard to how we are actually going to distribute these I am not sure of the logistics yet, but there is going to be a few thousand in circulation. They are coming out in boxes of around 125 per box and what we would be asking is for all businesses that want these to actually take a whole box, just to make it easier to distribute them, then if you are not using them please let us have them back and we will come and collect them. If you have seen the Bondgate Bakery paper carrier bags, the large ones, that’s exactly what they look like, they are fully recyclable paper and obviously all we want is for people walking round Otley, which these carrier bags are promoting Otley as a town to come and shop and spend your money.”
3. We are also working on a Business Training Programme. Last year before lockdown I (RA) actually put together a whole year’s worth of training for all the businesses but this got shelved after month two. So this is being resurrected and we started last week with ‘How to Future Proof Growing Your Business’ on Line and we had about 7 businesses attending – all different types of businesses in Otley both retail and non retail which was good. A ‘Social Media Café’ on Zoom this week Tuesday at 11am and also Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April going to be ‘Mental Health Awareness Training’ and that is going to be run by Ken Creek at White Rose Training, again that is going to be on zoom and live on the Otley BID website and it will also be pushed out on social media. There is also another raft of training: so far we have it all confirmed up to the end of July, so we have a training course every month. They are all on Thursday’s which makes it easier for everyone to remember. So the next one will be on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May we have ‘Health Safety and Introduction to the Workplace Office & Shops’ again that is with Ken Creek on Zoom. Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June which is ‘First Aid at Work Awareness’ again with Ken Creek and Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July is ‘Fire Safety Training’ and we need that to be a face-to-face training session, so hopefully going to talk to the Black Horse and arrange to get some undercover outdoor space.” As soon as it is sorted it will be on the BID website, Social Media and RA will email the details out to everybody.
4. “Obviously my (RA) visits are still on hold in terms of not really wanting to go out to the retail businesses currently open and doing face-to-face meetings, it doesn’t feel comfortable at the moment and businesses allowing 2-3 people coming into their shop, I don’t really want to take up space and be hanging around when potentially there are people wanting to spend money in there. But what I am planning to do is hopefully do monthly Zoom meeting (1 hour duration). Initially it could be a smallish core group of businesses all from different industries both retail and B to B. I don’t want it to be formal, it is something that we can all just learn something from, maybe have a business on that just talks about their experiences

through lockdown, maybe how they have pivoted the business, how they have kept going and share some experience that we can all learn from.” So if anyone wants to be involved in that contact RA and we will put an agenda together and a date for the diary.

5. “We are currently working on the 7.5k grant we received from LCC . We sent out a survey and got lots of feedback and we are reviewing that feedback at the moment but the challenged we are finding (we have a nice chunk of money to help businesses/Otley get back on their/its feet) but divided between 400-500 businesses it is not a lot of money. The other challenge is how do we help all the BID Businesses, fairly? We have got a large percentage of retail and offices that are B to B we also have the Wharfebank Business Centre. How can we spend 7.5k on helping all those businesses and Otley recover? That is the challenge and the headache!”
6. “We are still supporting the quarterly newsletter and what Visit Otley are doing. As well as those we are also getting involved in something new : the Podcasts that Jen from Woolpack Studios is doing and this is something Jen could work on with the Wharfebank Business Centre as well and that is a way of drawing them into the town and promotions we are doing for Otley Businesses.”
7. “If there are any issues that people are having with their landlords this is a reminder that Tim Wilkinson will help out with anything like that. He can look at you contract with you landlord and draft a letter to the landlord and help with other issues.”
8. Finally, I found out recently a project ‘Too Good to Go’ and it’s about reducing food waste, particularly for the businesses actually selling and producing food. Sally at Bondgate Bakery is kind of Championing this project as far as Otley is concerned. Initially before she got to joining them and she was giving away 2 bags of food waste from the bakery per week. But by giving to ‘Too Good to Go’ organisation she gets some money back from that waste she would be throwing in the bin or sending to a farm. She is now giving them 1 bag per day (food that is fine to eat) and getting a little money back. The organisation then sells on to people who might not normally be able to afford to buy that kind of food. So it is a win, win for everybody. If you are interested and want to get involved just drop RA a line.”

In conclusion the Chair said if there is anything the Chamber of Trade could help the Otley BID with re ‘foot soldiers’, he was sure he could muster up a few volunteers.

**9. A.O.B.**

There was no other business