

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on
1 December 2025 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town
Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	A Woollard N Spencer	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	G Christy M Field K French R Skoulding	S Court J French M Purser
	Cambridgeshire County Councillors		C Galbraith
	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk		S Lemmon S Farmer
	Public		1
	Press		0

129 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Spencer, Orbell, Lawler and Taylor.

130 Police Update

The Mayor is still waiting to arrange a meeting with the Neighbourhood Sargeant. Parking enforcement was discussed as well as the incident in Broad Street following the Christmas Lights switch-on event.

131 Planning Applications

Because of their position on the Fenland District Council Planning and Development Committee and her commitment to Paragraph 28 of the Fenland District Council Code of Conduct, Councillors J French and M Purser declared a permanent personal interest and takes no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

<i>Application</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, Number and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
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2 additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR25/0862/FDL	Mr Colin Roberts, Flower Garden Group Erect 6 x dwellings at site of former Gas Distribution Centre, Gas Road
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Received: 19 November 2025
Reply by: 10 December 2025
Recommendation: Approval

F/YR25/0872/F

Matt Leak
Alterations to existing dwelling including erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling involving the demolition of existing extension at 45 Grounds Avenue
Received: 21 November 2025
Reply by: 12 December 2025
Recommendation: Approval

F/YR25/0878/F

Mr & Mrs J White
Erect 2 x dwellings with garages and formation of a new access involving demolition of existing buildings at land west of Prospect House Farm, Whittlesey Road
Received: 24 November 2025
Reply by: 15 December 2025
Recommendation; Approval

F/YR25/0874/FDL

MJS Construction
Erect a block of 20 flats at site of former 15 Station Road (the old Freezer shop).
Received: 27 November 2025
Reply by: 18 December 2025
*Cllr Woollard declared an interest in this item.
Recommendation: Approval (although the Council is concerned over the lack of car parking and the impact this will have in town)

F/YR25/0892/TRCA

Mr John Clarke
Fell 1 Horse Chestnut within a conservation AREA AT 108 High Street.
Received: 27 November 2025
Reply by: 18 December 2025
Recommendation; Approval (Council wishes to see a replacement tree planted)

132 Public Participation

Clive Lemmon had registered an interest to speak with the Clerk in connection with the Christmas Lights item and indicated that he wished to speak following said discussions, a request that was approved by the Mayor.

134 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Town Mayor:

Main Meeting – 3 November 2025

Planning Meeting – 17 November 2025

Personnel and Admin – 31 October 2025 (agreed by the Personnel and Admin Committee, acknowledged by Council)

135 Matters Arising

Main Meeting – MVAS. Cllr J French had said that the existing list be used for the purposes of the new Attachments License. The Clerk explained that the full list was not comprehensive and did not include all the information required by the County Council (ie postcodes). Cllr Field suggested that councillors identify all posts that should be included in the application.

Personnel and Admin Meeting – The constitution of the Committee was questioned. It was explained that the committee has always been comprised of the Mayor, Deputy and 2 senior councillors. Town Council Representatives to Town Council committees and bodies, as well as council representation to outside bodies, was discussed and updated at the May meeting and the lists are appended to the relevant minutes (and published).

136 Budget

The Clerk had presented the proposals for the 2026/2027 budget to councillors at 3 November meeting, a month earlier than usual. As such, the precept had been prepared on the basis of an estimated council tax base. Since this was prepared, the District Council had confirmed the council tax base and the estimated charge per property for 2026/2027 had been recalculated accordingly. The council tax base may be further adjusted again prior to budget ratification in January.

Cllr Christy advocated for giving CAB more funding, although a decision had been made, and Cllr J French advised that CAB had received funding from another source.

137 Christmas Lights – Proposal to create an autonomous Christmas Lights Committee

The Mayor and Chairman of the Christmas Lights Committee thanked the Christmas Lights Committee for their hard work and delivering a successful switch-on event.

Following the Personnel and Admin meeting on 31 October, The Mayor put forward a proposal to give the Christmas Lights full autonomy going forward.

The Council would continue to support Christmas Lights financially (£20,000), but the Committee would be entirely independent.

The Clerk had drafted a Constitution and Terms of Reference for convenience (circulated on 26 November) that could be used as a starting point and adapted as required.

Cllr J French suggested that the existing lights be sold to the new body for a nominal fee.

Cllr Field wished to discuss the proposal with the committee at its next meeting in January.

Mr Lemmon stated that there was an historical account containing over £5,000 which was an old lighting contingency account. The balance would be transferred to a newly-formed

properly constituted committee. Otherwise, the account would be closed and monies transferred to March Town Council.

Mr Lemmon reminded those present that the Council could not offset VAT on behalf of the new body by paying invoices on its behalf and so they might consider becoming VAT registered.

Councillors voted in favour of the proposal to establish a separately constituted Christmas Lights body.

138 Grants & Donations

An application had been received from FACT for a Christmas event. Councillors voted to defer any decision to grant to the January meeting pending receipt of a full breakdown of the costings for the event and further financial information.

139 Allotments – Proposal to update rules and regulations (expanded handbook) for new and current tenants from 2027

The Deputy Clerk had prepared a handbook for allotment holders. All Councillors welcomed and supported this.

140 Band Concerts – Review of 2025 and proposals for 2026

Information about the 2025 events had been circulated to councillors with the agenda and the success of the bands was reviewed.

Cllr Skoulding suggested that young groups and local bands be encouraged to participate in future, to provide a mix of music for all tastes and to encourage a younger audience to attend. Cllr Christy who is involved with the Junction Youth Project said that they might be interested in taking part since the karaoke was very popular.

It was agreed that the Deputy Clerk try to source new acts for 2026.

141 Town Council Christmas Holiday Opening

142 Local Highways Improvements

The Clerk reminded councillors that the deadline for submission of new schemes was early January. Evidence would need to be collated well in advance of the deadline if any new schemes had been identified.

Cllr French said that traffic-calming measures were desperately required in Maple Grove to tackle speeding, particularly since a child had been recently hit by a car.

Cllr Field mentioned Elwyn Road, but the measures proposed would not fall within the LHI scheme (County Council Galbraith confirmed this to be the case and Cllr J French would also raise this as there was some other funding available that could potentially be utilised).

143 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

All email updates were being circulated by the Clerk as and when received.

Cllr Galbraith discussed various issues including new/replacement yellow-lining outside the Fire Station and remedial works on Nene Parade.

144 Fenland District Council Update

All email updates were being circulated by the Clerk as and when received.

Cllr J French updated Councillors regarding new bollards to be installed in town to prevent nuisance parking on the new paving/areas of public realm.

145 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:15pm.

Councillor A Woollard.....5 January 2026
Mayor of March.