

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL.

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 2nd December 2019 in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	RF Skoulding K French	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	SR Court AR Donnelly R Jack MW Purser RW White	DW Connor J French RM Johnson G Tustin
	FDC Corporate Director FDC Environmental Health Manager		Carol Pilson Annabel Tighe
	Cambs County Councillor		JW Gowing
	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk		C Lemmon GSD Wilkinson
	Public		None

122 Apologies

No apologies were received.

123 Police Update

No police were in attendance, but a written update had been circulated to all Councillors earlier in the day.

It was noted that Councillors who had any concerns whatsoever about the police update should contact Sgt Richard Lugg directly.

124 Presentation by Carol Pilson, FDC Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer, regarding the FDC Littering Enforcement Contract

Carol Pilson was accompanied by Annabel Tighe, the FDC Environmental Health Manager, and provided March Town Councillors with the following information relating to the FDC Littering Enforcement Contract with Kingdom:

- a) A pilot two year contract has been in place that is likely to cease at the end of January 2020.
- b) FDC has been satisfied with the service provided but Peterborough (a shared service Council) is less so.
- c) The contract has been cost neutral.
- d) Even with court action, only about two-thirds of fixed penalty notices are actually paid.
- e) Various alternative options are being considered and, in due course, decisions must be made.

During a question and answer session that ensued, the following queries were raised:

- a) Would March Town Council be prepared to contribute towards this service?
- b) What are the March Town Council priorities?
- c) Since the FDC Street Scene operatives do such a good job already, and rather than utilize an external contractor, could this be an additional service provided in-house?

No definitive decisions were taken and further discussions would take place during January 2020.

Following their presentation, Carol and Annabel were thanked by the Mayor and left the meeting at 7.37pm.

125 Planning Applications

Because of his position on the Fenland District Council Planning and Development Committee and his commitment to Paragraph 28 of the Fenland District Council Code of Conduct, Councillor Connor declared a personal interest and took no part in the discussions relating to planning matters.

It was also noted that, due to their involvement in the building industry, Councillors Purser and Skoulding would not take part in any discussions relating to planning issues.

Councillors Connor, Purser and Skoulding all left the debating table for the entirety of this agenda item.

Councillor J French declared that she had been appointed as a substitute to Fenland District Council (FDC) Planning Committee. However, to ensure the Town Council has an appropriate level of expertise and experience she will not take up the FDC post until Town Councillors have had planning training.

It was agreed that six additional planning applications would be discussed.

Councillor K French took the chair for this one agenda item only.

*Application
Number*

*Name and address of applicant, details of application,
and recommendation of March Town Council*

F/YR19/0832/F

Mr Horwood & Ms Cleere, The Bungalow, 340 Wisbech Road, March.

Erect 1 x dwelling (single-storey 4-bed) and detached garage involving demolition of existing dwelling and the temporary siting of a caravan (during construction) (part retrospective) at The Bungalow, 340 Wisbech Road, Westry, March.

Revised proposals have been received in respect of the above. The revision is: Design revised (including reduced height) and access to remain as existing.

Received: 20 November 2019.

Reply by: 4 December 2019.

Recommend approval.

F/YR19/0913/F

Mr S Rutterford, 63 Elwyn Road, March.

Erection of a workshop building for storage and general maintenance of construction plant with associated office (sui generis use) involving demolition of one existing building at 38 Whittlesey Road, March.

Revised proposals have been received in respect of the above.

The revision is: The description of the proposed development has been amended to reflect that being applied for and a revised plan showing parking arrangement on site has been received.

Received: 21 November 2019.

Reply by: 5 December 2019.

Recommend approval.

F/YR19/0972/FDC***

Fenland District Council, Fenland Hall, County Road, March.

Erect 1 x dwelling (outline application with all matters reserved) at Land East of 80 Upwell Road, March.

Received: 18 November 2019.

Reply by: 9 December 2019.

Also see the following revision to this application.

F/YR19/0972/FDC***

Fenland District Council, Fenland Hall, County Road, March.

Erect 1 x dwelling (outline application with all matters reserved) at Land East of 80 Upwell Road, March.

Revised proposals have been received in respect of the above.

The revision is: The application site has been amended to show the existing footpath to the side retained.

Received: 26 November 2019.

Reply by: 10 December 2019.

Recommend approval.

F/YR19/0988/F###

Mulberry March, 3 New Woods Drive, Wimblington.

Change of use from Hairdressers (A1) to Beauty/Botox Salon (Sui Generis) to include the conversion of a detached double garage to treatment rooms at 11B Gaul Road, March.

Received: 20 November 2019.

Rely by: 11 December 2019.

Also see the following revision to this application.

F/YR19/0988/F###

Mulberry March, 3 New Woods Drive, Wimblington.

Change of use from Hairdressers (A1) to Beauty/Botox Salon (Sui Generis) to include external cladding, the conversion of a detached double garage to treatment rooms, and the erection of a single-storey link passageway at 11B Gaul Road, March.

Revised proposals have been received in respect of the above.

The revision is: Updated arrangement to include the erection of a single-storey link passageway.

Received: 25 November 2019.

Rely by: 9 December 2019.

Recommend approval.

- F/YR19/1000/RM Mr Craig Huber, Spartan Group Holdings Ltd., Springwood Drive, Braintree.
Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to F/YR19/0307/O for the erection of 8 x 3-storey 4-bed (carports to plots 4 & 5 only) at Land East of 3 Woodville Drive, Westry, March.
Received: 28 November 2019.
Reply by: 19 December 2019.
Since they both live in close proximity to the application site, Councillors J & K French declared personal interests and took no part in the discussions relating to this application.
Councillor Jack took the chair for this one application only.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR19/1002/F Millfield Developments Ltd., 38 Burrowmoor Road, March.
Erect 1 x dwelling (single-storey 3-bed) at Plot 8, 33 Gaul Road, March.
Received: 28 November 2019.
Reply by: 19 December 2019.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR19/1003/F Mr Lloyd Johnson, 67 Station Road, March.
Raising of boundary fence to 2.7 metres (max) to existing dwelling (retrospective) at 67 Station Road, March.
Received: 28 November 2019.
Reply by: 19 December 2019.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR19/1006/F Mr Peter Benson, 2 Fairfax Way, March.
Erect a porch to front of existing dwelling at 2 Fairfax Way, March.
Received: 28 November 2019.
Reply by: 19 December 2019.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR19/1009/F Mr & Mrs Agland, Crisp Farm, Whitemoor Road, March.
Erect single-storey front and side extensions and 2-storey extensions to front and rear of existing dwelling at Crisp Farm, Whitemoor Road, March.
Received: 28 November 2019.
Reply by: 19 December 2019.
Recommend approval.

F/YR19/1010/F

Mr & Mrs Norton, 54 Shaftesbury Avenue, March.
Erection of a single-storey extension to side and rear of existing dwelling involving demolition of existing side extension, formation of porch to front of existing dwelling and re-render external walls of dwelling, and convert existing garage to living accommodation and re-render external walls at Kismet, 54 Shaftesbury Avenue, March.
Received: 28 November 2019.
Reply by: 19 December 2019.
Recommend approval.

126 Public Participation

Since nobody had given the requisite notice to the Clerk to enable them to address the meeting, no public participation took place.

127 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:
Main Council Meeting of 4th November 2019.
Planning Sub-Committee Meeting of 18th November 2019.
Christmas Lights Working Party Meeting of 18th November 2019.

128 Matters Arising

Re Main Council Meeting of 4th November 2019:

Re Minute 118c: The FDC High Street funding application is progressing well. The consultants responsible for this document will present their application to the March Town Main Council Meeting of 6th January 2020 prior to its official submission on 15th January 2020. They will then report back to the March Town Main Council Meeting on 2nd March 2020 with a full update.

Re Christmas Lights Working Party Meeting of 18th November 2019:

The Mayor, Councillor Skoulding, thanked everyone for the assistance they had provided at the “switch-on” event on Friday 29th November 2019.

He also thanked all those that had been involved with the Christmas Market on Sunday 1st December 2019.

Additionally, he requested that all Councillors help at the Senior Citizens Concert on Thursday 5th December 2019.

129 Grants and Donations

Prior to discussions commencing, the Town Clerk advised Councillors that £2,000 had been included in the 2019/2020 budget for this agenda item.

Councillors could determine whether this amount should be viewed as £500 per quarter or a lump sum to be spent as and when required.

In the financial year to date £1,120 had already been expended. This leaves an available

balance of £880.

Three applications for funding had been received as follows:

Name: March Lions CIO.
Amount Requested: £245.
Purpose of Grant: To pay for an inverter and two batteries for the Lions PA system.

Name: Friends of March Railway Station.
Amount Requested: £580.
Purpose of Grant: To pay for an under-counter fridge (£180) and a heavy duty marquee for use at fund-raising events (£400).

Name: Revitalise Respite Holidays.
Amount Requested: £764.
Purpose of Grant: To cover the cost of two respite breaks for March disabled persons and their carers.

It was noted that each of the applications met the necessary criteria and, following lengthy discussions, the following grants were agreed:

March Lions CIO: £NIL (March Lions have been extremely successful with their applications in the past and, in view of the current number of requests, it was felt that other applicants should be given priority).

Friends of March Railway Station: £400 (to cover the cost of a heavy duty marquee).

Revitalise Respite Holidays: £382 (to cover the cost of one respite break).

130 Local Highway Improvement Scheme 2020 / 21

Councillors were circulated on 11th November 2019 with details of the feasibility study relating to the March Town Council 2020/21 LHI bid for Norwood Avenue.

It was noted that the scheme was much more expensive than originally anticipated, and could only be delivered if MTC agreed to increase its contribution to £17,573.73p.

However, Councillor J French notified the meeting that this scheme had now been included in the March Town Transport Strategy as one of two “quick fix” projects and, therefore, there was now no need to provide any funding for such scheme.

131 Budget 2020 / 21

The Clerk presented the proposals for the 2020 / 2021 budget and precept.

The Clerk also informed Councillors of the following:

- a) At this point in time, Towns and Parishes did not have to work under the same Government constraints that Districts and Counties were bound by i.e. a restricted rise in Council Tax charges.
- b) Towns and Parishes could, in the future, be requested to undertake more additional functions that Districts and Counties currently undertook but may decide to cut back due to budget constraints.

- c) The budget presented took account of the economic climate and likely changes to future precept rules. It had been set to maintain the services and support currently provided whilst ensuring adequate reserves.
- d) Due to the possibility of the FDC tax-base estimate changing, it would be necessary to approve the budget and precept in principle at this meeting and then ratify or amend the figures accordingly at the 6th January 2020 meeting.

In particular, the Clerk highlighted the following points within the budget:

- a) Maintaining relatively high contingencies due to the unpredictable nature of local politics in possibly having to provide unexpected support.
- b) Continued support for the town's CCTV.
- c) Continued support for Estover Playing Field 2015 CIC.
- d) Slightly increased support for March Museum and March Street Pride.

Following discussions, it was unanimously agreed that the budget and precept be accepted without amendment (Proposer Councillor K French, Seconder Councillor Connor).

The figures accepted equated to a budget of £284,470 and a precept requirement of £320,000.

It was agreed that these figures would be ratified (following amendment if necessary) at the 6th January 2020 meeting.

Full details relating to the budget and precept will be included as an appendix to the 6th January 2020 minutes, at which time all outstanding items will have been finalised.

132 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

Nothing to report.

133 Fenland District Council Update

Nothing to report.

134 Schedule of Accounts

The Schedule of Accounts, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.25pm

Councillor RF Skoulding 6th January 2020.
 Mayor of March.