

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on
3 August 2026 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	S Court J French H Orbell M Purser G Christy	K French J Lawler R Skoulding T Taylor
	Town Clerk		S Lemmon
	Assistant Town Clerk		S Farmer
	Public		0
	Press		0

66 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Field.

67 Police Update

Parking enforcement has continued in Broad Street and on Station Road, although this is not a high priority for the police.

Cllr Lawler advised of nuisance issues on Nene Parade with youngsters knocking on residents' doors.

Cllr Taylor shared information about the new Rural Crime Team Sargeant and a new scheme to apply stickers to telehandlers and similar vehicles (which are frequently stolen from farms) in a bid to prevent ATM raids. There has been a high number of local field fires recently which coincides with a recent worrying Facebook trend/challenge for 10-14 year olds being encouraged to set straw bales alight. This is a priority for the Rural Crime Team.

Cllr Lawler asked if the police could attend council meetings. The Mayor confirmed they would be welcome to attend.

68 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, Councillor J French and Cllr Purser declare a permanent personal interest and take no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

Application

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

It was agreed that 3 additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR26/0549/F	Mr Shaun Saunders Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling at 125 Badgeney Road. Received: 23 July 2026 Reply by: 13 August 2026 Recommendation; Approval
F/YR26/0561/FDC	Fenland District Council Erect 2 dwellings at Land West of 37 Brewin Avenue. Received: 27 July 2026 Reply by: 17 August 2026 Recommendation; Refusal - overdevelopment
Y/YR26/0566/FDL	Mr Granger Erect 1 self-build/custom build dwelling involving the demolition of existing dwelling at Holly Cottage, The Chase. Received: 31 July 2026 Reply by: 21 August Recommendation; Approval
F/YR26/0569/F	Mr D Parker, St Lawrence Hall Farms Ltd Erect an attached garage to side of existing dwelling involving the demolition of existing outbuilding at Hook Drove Bungalow, Hook Drove, Wimblington Received 30 July 2026 Reply by: 20 August 2026 Recommendation; Approval
F/YR26/0571/TRCA	Mr M Young Works to 3 cherry trees and 1 buddleia tree within a Conservation Area at 95 High Street. Received: 30 July 2026 Reply by: 20 August 2026 Recommendation; Approval <i>subject to</i> complying with the Tree Officer's recommendations (no trimming back of any live branches)

69 Public Participation

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

70 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting: 6 July 2026
Planning Sub-Committee: 20 July 2026

71 Matters Arising

Main Meeting, Minute 60; Cllr Christy was advised that Christmas Lighting was no longer Council business and would not be revisited. The Friends of March Christmas Lights bank account had been transferred to the new committee and councillors were satisfied that there were no further issues or concerns.

72 St Wendredas Closed Churchyard

The Clerk advised councillors that Fenland District Council had now officially taken responsibility for the closed churchyards at St Wendredas.

73 Assertion 10 – Website Compliance Proposal

The Clerk had circulated to councillors various communications and advices flagging additional regulatory pressures on local authorities introduced this year relating to Assertion 10, AGAR, PSBAR and WCAG compliance.

In response, the Clerk had researched and consulted with SLCC and Recite Me Digital Accessibility and Inclusion Consultants (amongst others) to explore ways to ensure compliance for March Town Council and enable the Clerk to make the necessary declarations in the AGAR.

A programme of proportionate action designed to meet the regulatory expectations in a practical, manageable and cost-effective way had been negotiated with Recite Me which the Clerk proposed to councillors for consideration and approval.

There is a cost implication for this professional remediation service which will ensure the website and all documents are fully accessible, but this was balanced against the much more costly route of in-house remediation which the council neither had the resources or expertise to manage.

Cllr Skoulding proposed that the Clerk appoint Recite Me and this was seconded by Cllr Purser with all voting in favour with the exception of Cllr Christy who objected on the grounds that it was not a reasonable proportionate approach for a small public sector body. The Clerk explained that what was proposed was the bare minimum to ensure full compliance and enable her to lawfully sign off the AGAR.

She confirmed that the council had the funds in place and legal responsibilities could not be ignored.

74 NALC Model Contract of Employment – July 2026

The Clerk advised that it would be necessary to draft new contracts of employment to incorporate changes arising from the Employment Rights Act 2025. Revisions include updates to probationary periods ahead of anticipated changes due to take effect from 1 January 2027 as well as amendments to references relating to Statutory Sick Pay. There would be no other changes to any other terms or conditions.

75 March Museum – License to Assign – Update

The Clerk confirmed that due to 2025 outgoing and incoming trustees of the March Museum it had become necessary to reflect these changes at The Land Registry and draft a License to Assign the original Deed of Trust.

The new trustees are now seeking legal advice after considerable delay, but it is hoped that the matter would be concluded shortly.

76 Allotment Update

Water at Robingoodfellows was discussed as well as access to Wimblington Road in light of a recent planning application that appeared to encroach onto the allotment access. The Clerk had flagged this latter issue with Fenland District Council Planning department.

77 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

The Clerk reported that all email updates are being circulated on a daily as-and-when-received basis.

Cllr J French provided an update on a 2023 LHI scheme – Norwood Avenue speed cushions and island had been installed/completed.

MATS improvement works to High Street and St Peters Road were underway.

Hobbs Lot Bridge should be completed in/by November.

Cllr Skoulding extended his thanks to CCC for carrying out tree works on Upwell Road.

It was confirmed that the brambles encroaching on Elwyn Road pavements causing disability scooters etc to ride on the road are the responsibility of The Middle Level Commissioners.

Cllr Spencer kindly agreed to cut these back himself to prevent a potential RTI.

Cllr Christy had reported a similar issue re overgrown brambles obstructing the pavement on Wimblington Road.

78 Fenland District Council Update

The Clerk reported that all emails are being circulated on a daily as-and-when-received basis.

Barclays Bank has now been fully demolished, and the public toilets are due to open by the end of August. As well as issues with Anglian Water, there have been snagging problems and difficulties sourcing doors.

There have been many complaints about the state of the pavements in Broad Street and the pavement near the Card Shop is already crumbling and damaged.

CCC are responsible for cleaning the pavements, although it is not expected that this will happen imminently.

Cllr J French advised that the planters in Broad Street were the responsibility of FDC and March in Bloom. March in Bloom had also tidied the area around The Acre Pub.

Concern was expressed regarding the number and severity of sewage dumping incidents in rivers in neighbouring counties which is impacting on local waterways.

Councillors were also concerned about sewage issues at Creek Fen and the permanent, awful stench around Estover and Station Road caused by human waste and the recent high temperatures. Cllr Skoulding is attending a meeting about this on 4 August.

Fly-tipping incidents are on the increase with a number of rubbish-filled caravans being tipped locally. Hostmoor Avenue appears to be a hotspot. Incidents should be reported.

79 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:10pm.

Councillor A Woollard7 September 2026
Mayor of March.