**MARCH TOWN COUNCIL.**

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 5th September 2016 in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

**Present** Councillor K French Deputy Town Mayor

 Councillors SR Court MEC Field

 J French ML George

 JW Gowing CC Owen

 A Pugh MW Purser

 RF Skoulding

 Town Clerk C Lemmon

 Asst. Town Clerk GSD Wilkinson

**78 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Donnelly and Harris.

**79 Police Update**

No police were in attendance, but a written update had been circulated earlier in the day. Councillors expressed concern that the reports were getting shorter and omitted many instances that had been seen in the press or on social media.

**80 Planning Applications**

It was 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 Purser and Skoulding both left the debating table for the entirety of this agenda item.

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

*Application Name and address of applicant, details of application,*

*Number and recommendation of March Town Council*

F/YR16/0696/RM Mr & Mrs Edgoose, 20A Alexandra Road, Wisbech.

 Reserved Matters application relating to the detailed matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission F/YR13/0562/O for erection of 3 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings and 1 x 2-storey 5-bed dwelling and detached garage with playroom/gym above.

 Land East Of Silver Street, March.

 Received: 22 August 2016.

 Reply by: 5 September 2016.

 Recommend approval.

F/YR16/0722/F Mr M Constable, 60 Knights End Road, March.

 Erection of single-storey front, side and rear extensions to existing dwelling involving demolition of existing garage.

 S/a.

Received: 26 August 2016.

 Reply by: 13 September 2016.

 Recommend approval.

F/YR16/0733/F Mr S Pilbrow, Green Oaks, Imberhorne Lane, East Grinstead, West Sussex.

 Erection of a single-storey block of 5 shops and single-storey extension to rear of existing restaurant.

 25 Broad Street, March.

Received: 30 August 2016.

 Reply by: 16 September 2016.

Recommend approval.

F/YR16/0737/F Mr & Mrs Moore, 109 Dagless Way, March.

 Erection of a single-storey rear extension to rear involving demolition of existing conservatory.

 S/a.

Received: 2 September 2016.

 Reply by: 20 September 2016.

 Recommend approval.

F/YR16/0745/TRTPO Sequence UK Ltd., 18/19 Sheep Market, Spalding.

 Works to 1no Lime covered by TPO 15/1986.

 32 County Road, March.

Received: 5 September 2016.

 Reply by: 22 September 2016.

 Recommend approval.

F/YR16/0441/F Erection of 94 dwellings and a bin store Land East of York Lodge, Gaul Road, March.

Application withdrawn.

Withdrawal noted.

F/YR16/0748/F Ms K Amps, 34 Foxglove Way, March.

 Erection of a first-floor side extension to existing dwelling.

 S/a.

Received: 5 September 2016.

 Reply by: 23 September 2016.

Recommend approval.

**81 Public Participation**

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

**82 Minutes of Meetings**

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Council Meeting of 1st August 2016.

Planning Sub-Committee Meeting of 15th August 2016.

Christmas Lights Working Party Meeting of 15th August 2016.

**83 Matters Arising**

Re Main Council Meeting of 1st August 2016:

Minute 65: The Clerk reported that he had e-mailed PCSO Shane Green on 2nd August 2016 to establish when the change of date and venue for the Police Forum had been agreed. A reminder was forwarded on 24th August 2016. A response dated 4th September 2016 was circulated to all Councillors on 5th September 2016.

Minute 70: Trevor Watson was emailed on 2nd August 2016 to ascertain why certain information had been omitted from the Flooding Update. A response dated 8th August 2016 was circulated to all Councillors on that same day.

Minute72: An order for the Wimblington Road streetlights and associated costs was placed on 9th August 2016. The capital cost equates to approximately £12,500.00p (as previously agreed), with annual costs relating to energy and maintenance commencing below £1,070.00p in Year 1. These costs will rise or fall annually in accordance with inflation or deflation.

 Councillors were circulated with full details on 10th August 2016. A specific agenda item is included later in the meeting.

Minute 74: Councillor Owen provided an update regarding Young People March which did not suggest a funding shortfall as feared.

**84 March Neighbourhood Plan**

Information concerning the March Neighbourhood Plan has been circulated as and when

received. Progress is continuing and, hopefully, we will soon be at the stage where the document

can be forwarded for formal submission.

**85 Flooding Update**

An update from Trevor Watson was e-mailed to all Councillors on 30th August 2016.

**86 Grants and Donations**

The Clerk informed Councillors that £1,000.00p had already been expended from this year’s budget, leaving a further £1,000.00p available for distribution during the remainder of the year.

One application for funding had been received as follows:

Name: Cambridgeshire Lowland Search and Rescue (CamSAR).

Amount: Any amount.

Purpose: Contribution towards upgrade of communications equipment to move to a digital network.

It was agreed that the application met the necessary criteria.

Following discussions, it was unanimously agreed that the following amount should be awarded:

£300.00p.

**87 Wimblington Road Street Lighting**

An order was finally placed on 9th August 2016, and Councillors were forwarded full details relating thereto on 10th August 2016.

Following a request from the Clerk, Councillors unanimously ratified the placement of such order and expressed their desire to see the works completed as quickly as possible.

**88 Street Lighting (General)**

Councillors formally discussed the situation whereby Cambridgeshire County Council turns off a large number of streetlights between 2am and 6am.

Although street lighting is not a statutory function, March Town Council could pay to have the lights within March left on.

However, following lengthy discussions, it was agreed that March Town Council could not afford to meet the cost thereof and, therefore, there was no alternative but to accept the decision taken by Cambridgeshire County Council.

It was noted that Cambridgeshire County Council’s gross budget (excluding schools) was approximately £548 million. The cost savings created by turning off the March streetlights equates to 0.002% of such budget.

The comparative gross budget for March Town Council is below £0.3 million, and the additional cost of paying for the streetlights equates to a 3.727% rise on such budget.

In conclusion, it was agreed that it was not possible to expect the lowest tier of Local Government, and the one with the lowest budget, to pay for everything that Districts and Counties wanted to withdraw from paying.

**89 2017 / 2018 Local Highway Improvement Scheme**

The following schemes were raised by various persons:

1. Ruth Johnson (town resident) – Implementation of a 20mph speed limit for all residential roads in March but excluding A and B roads. Initially this should be restricted to a pilot area in the North Ward inside, say, Dartford Road, Station Road and Norwood Road.
2. Councillor Jan French – Drop kerbs to assist mobility scooters etc to be installed or improved in all areas of March.
3. Councillor Malcolm George – All corners / junctions along Station Road (or other areas to be agreed) to be yellow lined.
4. Councillor Robert Skoulding – Extension of footpath / cycleway from Police Station into City Road.
5. Councillor Martin Field – 20mph limit and flashing signs outside Burrowmoor School.

Following discussions regarding the merit of each scheme, the following decisions were reached (please note the above order for schemes has been repeated irrespective of the order in which votes were taken):

1. Defeated by 8 votes to 2.
2. Scheme withdrawn by Councillor J French in favour of others.
3. Defeated by 8 votes to 2.
4. Approved by 7 votes to 1 with 2 abstentions.
5. No vote taken, but Councillor Pugh to investigate whether the Safer Routes to School Initiative is still operational.

It was agreed, therefore, that March Town Council should proceed with the scheme proposed by Councillor Skoulding.

It was also agreed that:

1. The Clerk should complete the necessary application forms.
2. March Town Council would be prepared to contribute £3,000 towards the cost of such scheme.
3. Councillor Owen should check and approve the application prior to submission.

**90 Cambridgeshire County Council Update**

It was noted that all information received from Cambridgeshire County Council had been circulated to Councillors by e-mail as and when received.

**91 Fenland District Council Update**

Councillor Owen had nothing to report.

**92 Schedule of Accounts**

The Schedule of Accounts, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30pm

Councillor AR Donnelly…………………………………………….. 3rd October 2016.

Mayor of March.