

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 7 September 2026 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	A Woollard	Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J Lawler M Field	J French H Orbell
	Cambridgeshire County Councillor	C Galbraith	
	Town Clerk		S Lemmon
	Assistant Town Clerk		S Farmer
	Public		1
	Press		0

82 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Skoulding, K French, Spencer, Purser, Taylor and Christy.

It was to be formally minuted, albeit in Cllr Spencer's absence, that the MAFF had once again been a fantastic event. A letter from the High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire was read out to councillors. Thanks were extended to Cllr Spencer and his dedicated team for delivering such an immaculately organised and hugely supported community event.

83 Police Update

There is a Police Liaison meeting at 1900-2000 on 29 September. Cllrs Woollard and Lawler will be attending. Cllr Lawler shared information about the Herbert Protocol - a standard risk-reduction form used by UK police and care providers to quickly gather vital information about vulnerable people - primarily those living with dementia - who go missing. It is National Rural Crime Action Week, this week. A spate of thefts of bicycles from March Railway Station was also reported.

84 Planning Applications

There were no planning applications to be discussed at this evening's meeting.

85 Public Participation

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

86 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting: 3 August 2026

Planning Sub-Committee: 17 August 2026

Personnel & Admin Meeting: 3 August 2026

87 Matters Arising

88 Small Grant Application

The application received was rejected on the basis that it relates to a new business start-up.

89 Fens Reservoir Update

Cllrs Woollard and Orbell attended a recent Anglian Water Fens Reservoir Community Liaison Group meeting.

Points to note;

- The full design scheme will be presented next year
- Planning Permission is expected to be applied for now in 2027, rather than 2028.
- It is a 10-year project
- It was confirmed that local companies would be invited to tender for contracts
- The reservoir will be owned by a new company (of institutional investors such as pension funds and insurance companies etc) – *not* Anglian Water
- Anglian Water will, however, purchase water from the reservoir
- Geo-technical investigations and surveys are ongoing
- Archaeological investigations will continue until December 2026, with a post medieval bottle stopper, a 5000-year old knife and 300-year old timbers having been discovered on site
- The reservoir will be embanked to use/re-purpose the excavated materials
- Drainage materials will be imported
- Concern was raised about transportation and the effect of construction traffic on local roads
- Most materials will be transported via rail. A new rail head *may* be built at Stonea
- If Whitemoor Depot is used, this will have significant implications for local roads and congestion
- All low-carbon options for plant machinery are being explored, and it is likely that most will be battery-powered
- Anglian Water, contrary to rumours, have not purchased land for badgers
- The board wishes to consult with local towns re workers (approximately 2,000) accommodation – whether accommodation is built on-site or contractors buy/rent in surrounding towns and villages
- Consideration should be given to MTC's response when formally consulted.
- It was agreed that March could benefit from workers living and spending money in the town

- However, there would be knock-on effects on schools and NHS. Cllr J French advised that relevant contributions/provision will be dealt with as part of the Planning Permission.
- There would also be a significant increase in vehicular activity by workers on local roads. It was suggested that construction worker buses could be organised to mitigate this.
- Construction period is estimated to be 4 years with construction starting in 2030
- The reservoir will take up to 2 years to fill
- It will not be until 2036 before it can start to supply water
- The project is a major infrastructure project. As such, the planning decision will be made by the Secretary of State, not FDC

90 MVAS

The unit remains on Station Road, but it is not currently operational. The batteries are not charging and are currently with Cllr Christy who is getting someone to check them.

91 Allotment Update – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

The Clerk updated Councillors in relation to an ongoing legal matter.

92 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Cllr Galbraith stated that Westwood School had received the full support of the County Council for a crossing, the difficulty was funding the project.

It was proposed that it could be done at the same time as the resurfacing outside Maple Grove.

Cllr J French was in discussions with the Combined Authority regarding funding.

Nene Parade; the bank is not collapsing as was previously thought. The problem is due to the road sliding away and pushing the bank. Reconstruction would commence soon.

Whittlesey Road will be repaired fully mid-November.

Upwell Road; This will be something of a County Council experiment, with new, environmentally friendly, more cost-effective materials and methods being employed.

Station Road – ongoing issues regarding poor parking and double yellow lineage were discussed.

93 Fenland District Council Update

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

Cllr J French stated that the new toilets are now finally open.

The hoarding outside Barclays would be fully removed next week, although the wall may have to be rebuilt.

Civil Parking Enforcement will be back on the agenda for Cabinet in November.

Cllr J French has a meeting with Paul Bristow next week about Maple Grove.
The Northern Link Road will be high on the agenda also.
Hostmoor Road will also be discussed; the left-hand turn onto the A141 flyover was installed over 23 years ago as a *temporary* measure, pending installation of either traffic lights or a roundabout.
Work has started on the Recycling Centre, which will become a lot more accessible and user-friendly.

It had been announced that Central Government has put the LGR (Local Government Reorganisation) on pause. No new timeline has been set for the process, but FDC elections are now expected to take place in May 2027 based on existing council boundaries.

94 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:25pm.

Councillor A Woollard5 October 2026
Mayor of March.