

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL.

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 7th September 2020 held via “Zoom” commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	K French R Jack	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	SR Court CK Elkin R Johnson RF Skoulding RW White	AR Donnelly J French MW Purser G Tustin
	County Councillor		J Gowing
	Persimmon Representatives		Michelle Jeffrey Anne Dew
	Town Clerk		C Lemmon

Public / Press No members of the public or press (although it was offered within the agenda notice) had requested permission to access the MTC “Zoom” group to witness proceedings.

To allow the meeting to take place via “Zoom”, and as agreed at the 6th April 2020 Main Council Meeting, Standing Orders are suspended until such time as the coronavirus epidemic abates.

75 Apologies

No apologies were received.

76 Presentation by Persimmon Homes regarding a Broad Concept Plan for March West

Michelle Jeffrey and Anne Dew of Persimmon Homes detailed the Broad Concept Plan for March West, which is the area of land located within the boundaries of Burrowmoor Road, Knights End Road and the A141.

The following points were highlighted:

- a) The area of land involved equates to 102.40 hectares of which Persimmon currently control 50.23 hectares.
- b) It is envisaged that approximately 2,200 homes will be built on this site over the course of the next 15 to 20 years. This could equate to anywhere between an additional 4,400 and 8,800 residents.
- c) 200 houses would be built initially and these would be accessed via Knights End Road.
- d) Eventually, the main access to the site would be via a “traffic-controlled” entrance from the A141. This could mean either a roundabout or a traffic light system.

- e) In the longer term, both the Burrowmoor Road and Knights End Road accesses to the A141 could be closed with all traffic having to travel through the new development to reach destinations within these areas.
- f) Within the overall plan for this area, cycleways, walkways, green space, two new schools and playing fields have been included.

Previously, March Town Council had raised the following concerns with Persimmon:

- a) Two new primary schools are welcomed, but the longer-term problem of senior school capacity also needs addressing.
- b) Doctors and dental surgeries are a major concern within the town with, for example, people having to wait up to nine weeks to see their own specified GP. Also, there is no availability of NHS dentists with some residents having to travel to Downham Market to get appointments.
- c) The sewerage system in March is already nearing capacity.
- d) Slightly more detail regarding the type of properties envisaged would be useful.
- e) Town Centre parking would not cope with the increased volume of traffic and additional areas would need to be provided.
- f) Vehicular access to the bypass would need to be carefully planned, both from the main access point and the secondary points where Burrowmoor Road and Knights End Road meet the A141.
- g) In general, housing within the town is welcomed, but this should not be at the expense of overwhelming local services and facilities.

Following the presentation, a question and answer session ensued.

The main points raised were as follows:

- a) Medical and dental facilities can only be included within the plan if so requested by the Health Authorities.
- b) Social housing would be included at the required level. No attempt would be made to circumnavigate these responsibilities by the use of viability studies after planning has been approved.
- c) In the initial building phase, problems could be created by the additional volume of traffic accessing the A141 via Knights End Road.
- d) Particular attention needed to be paid to sewerage disposal since March's current capability was very close to capacity.
- e) The inclusion of "green space" was welcomed.

At the conclusion of the question and answer session, Michelle and Anne were thanked by the Mayor and signed off from the meeting at 7.57pm.

77 Police Update

No police were in attendance but a written report had been circulated on Sunday 30th August 2020.

78 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes no part in 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.

Councillor J French declared that, since she has been made a substitute member for the FDC Planning Committee, she would not take part in any discussions relating to planning applications.

The afore-mentioned Councillors remained visible during this agenda item but all other members observed that their microphones were muted for the entire time.

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

<i>Application Number</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
F/YR20/0576/O	<p>Lisa Shepherd, 8 Jobs Lane, March. Erect 1 x dwelling (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at Land North West of 8 Jobs Lane, March. Revised proposals have been received in respect of the above. The revision is: Visibility splays added and application site (red line) amended accordingly. Received: 21 August 2020. Reply by: 4 September 2020. Recommend approval.</p>
F/YR20/0738/F	<p>Mr & Mrs Harrison, Riverside Farm, Hobbs Lot Bridge, Wisbech Road, March. Erect an agricultural building at Riverside Farm, Hobbs Lot Bridge, Wisbech Road, March. Received: 19 August 2020. Reply by: 9 September 2020. Recommend approval.</p>
F/YR20/0763/F	<p>Mrs Sheila Hearn, Owl Barn Lodge, 33 Knights End Road, March. Change of use of land from agricultural to domestic use and erect a stable block/ hay store at Owl Barn Lodge, 33 Knights End Road, March. Received: 27 August 2020. Reply by: 17 September 2020. Recommend approval.</p>
F/YR20/0768/F	<p>Mr A Fovargue, Cross Road Poultry Farm, Cross Road, March. Installation of a Bio-mass boiler and fuel silo (retrospective) at Cross Road Poultry Farm, Cross Road, March. Received: 2 September 2020. Reply by: 23 September 2020. Recommend approval.</p>

F/YR20/0798/TRTPO Mr Byron Harris, 23 High School Close, March.
Works to a Lime tree covered by TPO 15/1986 at 23 High School Close, March.
Received: 3 September 2020.
Reply by: 24 September 2020.
Recommend approval.

F/YR20/0799/TRTPO Ms Vicki Wright, 25 High School Close, March.
Works to a Lime tree covered by TPO 15/1986 at 25 High School Close, March.
Received: 3 September 2020.
Reply by: 24 September 2020.
Recommend approval.

79 Public Participation

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

80 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed:
Main Council Meeting of 3rd August 2020.
Planning Sub-Committee Meeting of 17th August 2020.
Unlike the procedure normally adopted whereby the Mayor immediately endorses the minutes, it was agreed that the Clerk should sign the minutes on her behalf.

81 Matters Arising

Re Main Council Meeting of 3rd August 2020:

Minute 68 / 54 / 41: It was reported that the Deputy Mayor's Chain had now been received and the Mayor's Chain had been repaired.

Minute 68 / 57: The new computer system has not yet been installed.

Minute 69: Whiting and Partners confirmed their willingness to continue as March Town Council's Internal Auditors on 4th August 2020.

82 Grants and Donations

No applications for funding have been received during the last quarter.

83 Local Government Services’ Pay Agreement 2020-21

On the 24th August 2020, agreement was reached between the National Employers and the National Joint Council on the rates of pay applicable for Council employees from 1st April 2020.

In consequence, and in accordance with the approved recommendations of the Personnel and Administrative Sub-Committee, the remuneration of the Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk will rise in accordance with this agreement.

The Clerk is paid in accordance with Spinal Scale 34 and the Assistant Town Clerk with Spinal Scale 12.

All scales have risen by 2.75%.

Payment plus arrears will be made with effect from the 5th October 2020 cheque run.

84 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

The Clerk reported that all email updates are being circulated on a daily basis.

Councillors J French and Gowing then reported as follows:

- a) The Community & Partnership Committee have awarded Fenland District Council £75,000 funding for West End Park improvements. This was supported by matched funding of £7,500 from Fenland District Council and £2,500 from March Town Council.
- b) Highways have commenced the resurfacing of several roads within town.
- c) Test boreholes are being dug in West End to investigate ongoing problems that have been encountered in that area.
- d) The Area Transport Strategy business plan is now being finalised.

85 Fenland District Council Update

Councillor J French reported as follows:

- a) £75,000 has been awarded by the CCC Community and Partnership Committee to fund improvements in West End Park (also see “a” above in Minute 84). The new play equipment and railings contained within the scheme are already on order.
- b) Civil Parking Enforcement is still being investigated for Fenland, although it would involve a minimum timescale of 12 to 15 months.

86 Schedule of Accounts

The Schedule of Accounts, as circulated, was agreed.

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

Councillor K French 5th October 2020.
Mayor of March.