

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **ANNUAL MEETING** of March Town Council held on 15 May 2023 in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	M Purser G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French S Harris H Orbell T Taylor	M Field K French J Lawler N Spencer A Woollard
	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk		S Lemmon S Taylor
	Public		34

23 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from County Councillor J Gowing.

24 Welcome and Introduction

Following a Guard of Honour provided by the March Air Cadets for the outgoing Mayor, Cllr K French, Cllr French welcomed everyone to the meeting and congratulated everyone on becoming elected onto March Town Council. Prior to the meeting commencing, Cllr French made the following statement:

“During the forthcoming weeks, if any newly elected Councillors need any advice, please contact the Town Clerk or the Assistant Town Clerk, as necessary.

Normal office hours are as follows:

Mondays to Wednesdays	8.00am to 3:30pm.
Fridays	8.30am to Midday.

The March Town Council telephone number is 01354 653709.
The Clerk’s mobile number is available to Councillors, please ask.

During a normal week, the Town Clerk works on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and the Assistant Town Clerk, works on Mondays, Wednesdays and Friday mornings.

Councillor training dates and information will be circulated as and when such details become available. Please check your emails regularly and attend training sessions to enable you to understand and discharge your Councillor duties fully and effectively. I would strongly urge Councillors to use the resources available on the NALC (National Association of Local Councils) and CAPALC (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils - a membership organisation affiliated to NALC) websites, who also offer training sessions.

This evening's meeting will not include a great amount of general business but, in the main, will clear all the formalities for your four-year term of office. You will be provided with a selection of documents this evening. Please study them carefully.

25 Nomination and Declaration of Town Mayor

The retiring Mayor, Councillor K French, made her outgoing remarks and thanked Councillors and the Mayor's Cadet for their assistance during her term of office.

Councillor K French then nominated Councillor M Purser as Mayor of March for the forthcoming year. This was seconded by Councillor J French, with all in favour. Councillor K French then officially handed over the robes and chain of office to Councillor Purser.

Councillor Purser accepted the post, delivered a speech of his aspirations and gratitude and signed his "Declaration of Office". He thanked the outgoing Mayor for all her efforts and stated that he would do everything in his power to carry out his duties for the benefit of the people of March.

26 Nomination and Declaration of Deputy Town Mayor

Councillor Purser then nominated Councillor Christy as Deputy Mayor of March. This was seconded by Councillor J French, with all in favour.

Councillor Purser then officially handed over the appropriate robes and chain.

Councillor Christy accepted the post, stated he would do all he could to assist the Mayor and the town of March and signed his "Declaration of Office".

27 Agreement of Mayor's Allowance

Councillor Purser declared a prejudicial interest and left the room whilst the Mayor's allowances were being discussed.

Councillor Christy took the Chair for this agenda item only.

It was unanimously agreed that the following allowance would apply for 2023 / 2024:

£3,450.00p.

This amount coincides with that provided within this year's budget.

28 Declarations of Office

Following items 25 and 26, all Councillors present signed their Declarations of Office and completed their office information sheets and returned both to the Assistant Town Clerk.

29 Register of Members Interests

All Councillors present were requested to complete their "Register of Members Interests" form within the following fourteen (14) days and return it to the office as soon as possible. This is a legal requirement.

Councillors were given the latest copies of the following documents:

- a) Standing Orders
- b) March Town Council Financial Regulations
- c) Model Code of Conduct
- d) Model Councillor-Officer Protocol
- e) "Helpful Information" sheet

The Clerk stressed the importance of Councillors familiarising themselves with these documents thoroughly at their earliest possible opportunity.

In addition, the Ceremonial Robes were distributed to each Councillor who signed acknowledgement forms indicating possession thereof.

30 Dates of Council Meetings for 2023 / 2024

The dates for the 2013 / 2024 meetings were agreed as presented (See Appendix 1).

31 Appointment of Committee Members & Council Representatives

It was agreed to appoint Committee Members and Council Representatives in accordance with Appendix 2 (2 pages).

32 Public Participation

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

33 Minutes of Meetings

The minutes of the following meetings were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Council Meeting of 3 April 2023.

Annual Assembly of 17 April 2023.

Planning Sub-Committee Meeting of 17 April 2023.

34 Matters Arising

Re Main Council Meeting 3 April 2023

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Minute 7 | Cllr J French updated Councillors on the progress of the drainage works. |
| Minute 8 | Cllr J French advised that the benches on the Market place would remain for the time being, although benches had been reconfigured due to misuse of the car park, with additional bollards being installed to prevent improper access/egress. |

35 Planning Applications

The Town Clerk advised new councillors that the Town Council is a planning *consultee*. The Town Council can make *recommendations* to the local planning authority – Fenland District Council, and she summarised the main planning reasons for any objections to an application.

Because of their positions on the Fenland District Council Planning and Development Committee and their commitment to Paragraph 28 of the Fenland District Council Code of Conduct, Councillors M Purser and J French declared a personal interest and took no part in the discussions relating to planning matters.

Councillors Purser and J French left the debating table for the entirety of this agenda item.

*Application
Number*

*Name & Address of Applicant, Details of Application,
and Recommendation of March Town Council.*

F/YR23/0334/F

Mr J Bligh, 19 Queens Street.

Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling involving the demolition of existing side/rear single-storey element at Marboro, 19 Queens Street, March.

Received: 24 April 2023

Reply by: 15 May 2023

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR23/0339/F

Mr N Ayres, 10 Laburnam Grove, March.

Agent: L Bevens Associates Architects Ltd.

Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling involving the demolition of conservatory at 10 Laburnam Grove, March.

Received: 26 April 2023

Reply by: 17 May 2023

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR23/0340/F

Mr R Khan, 5 Wyken Close, Luton

Agent: Peter Humphrey Associates Ltd

Erect 1 x dwelling (2-storey 4-bed) with detached garage involving demolition of function centre at Whitemoor Road Function Centre, Whitemoor Road, March.

Received: 26 April 2023

Reply by: 17 May 2023

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR23/0343/F

Ms Rebecca Bush/Chris Lynn, 148 Norwood Road, March.

Agent: Donald Insall Associates, Ely.

Use of part of domestic garage for home office and the installation of solar panels to garage roof, and erection of a shed and greenhouse within the curtilage of existing dwelling involving the removal of existing outbuildings at 148 Norwood Road, March.

Received: 27 April 2023

Reply by: 18 May 2023

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR23/0344/LB

Ms Rebecca Bush/Chris Lynn, 148 Norwood Road, March.
Agent: Donald Insall Associates, Ely.

Internal and external works to a listed building including external repairs, replacement windows, installation of bathroom fixtures involving removal of internal stud walls at 148 Norwood Road, March.

Received: 27 April 2023

Reply by: 18 May 2023

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR23/0357/F

Mr & Mrs Hill, 100 Nene Parade, March.

Agent: Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd

Erect a dwelling (2-storey 2-bed) at 100 Nene Parade, March.

Received: 3 May 2023

Reply by: 24 May 2023

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR23/0370/O

Mr Tony Byrne, March East Developments Ltd.

Agent: Artisan PPS Ltd, Ipswich.

Erect up to 130 dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access at Land to South of Barkers Lane, March.

Received: 4 May 2023

Reply by: 25 May 2023

Cllr K French declared a personal interest in this matter and left the debating table.

Recommendation; Objection.

The Town Council is concerned about flooding issues at the location and continued complaints regarding sewerage from nearby residents. It recommends restrictions be imposed on home owners regarding surface materials in the event of future driveway replacement to minimise risks of flooding. The recommendations of the archaeology report must be observed and implemented. Concerns regarding increased traffic flow on Barkers Lane and the safety of pupils at the adjacent school. Crucially, the Report from Barratt & David Wilson Homes at 4.7 states that third party land would be required to deliver satisfactory access to the site from Barkers Lane. It states that “vehicular access from Barkers Lane has been ruled out”. This therefore conflicts with the proposals to deliver safe and satisfactory access from Barkers Lane.

- F/YR23/0379/F Miss Nicola McGing, 151 Norwood Road, March.
Agent: Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd
Erect a single-storey rear extension including demolition of existing single-storey element at 151 Norwood Road, March.
Received; 3 May 2023
Reply by: 24 May 2023
Recommendation: Approval
- F/YR23/0378/F Mr Paul Richardson, 130 Upwell Road, March.
Agent: Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd.
Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling at 130 Upwell Road, March.
Received: 4 May 2023
Reply by: 25 May 2023
Recommendation: Approval

36 Rural/Market Town Group Membership

The Town Council had enjoyed a free 6-month trial membership to the Rural/Market Town Group, an organisation which, along with the Rural Services Network, argues for fairer funding for public services in rural areas. Paying membership of £182.00 pa is now due. Councillors voted unanimously in favour of remaining in the Group and authorised payment of the subscription fee.

37 Upgrade to Scribe Accounting Package – Allotments

The Clerk advised that she was investigating the purchase of the Scribe Allotments Package and sought approval from Councillors to proceed with the upgrade if she and the Assistant Town Clerk felt that the package would be beneficial following a full demonstration later in the month. Councillors voted unanimously in favour of the purchase if the Clerk was duly satisfied.

38 Schedule of Accounts

The Schedule of Accounts, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:00pm.

Councillor Mark Purser 5 June 2023
Mayor of March.

Appendix 1

Dates of March Town Council Meetings for 2023 / 2024
to be held in The Skoulding Suite at the Town Hall, March,
commencing at 7.15pm unless otherwise stated.

2023

5 & 19 June

3 & 17 July

7 & 21 August

4 & 18 September

2 & 16 October

6 & 20 November

4 & 18 December

2024

8 & 22 January

5 & 19 February

4 & 18 March

8 April

22 April * Main Meeting (formerly "Annual
Assembly" (with Planning after)

13 May * Annual Meeting (incl Planning)

Please note that, in general, the first Monday of the month is a
Main

Council Meeting and the third Monday of the month is a **Planning
Committee Meeting**.

As an advance notice, the Annual Museum Liaison Meeting will be held on
Monday 27 November 2023 at 7.30pm at March Museum.

Town Council Representatives - 2023/2024

Museum Liaison Committee (3)	Councillors M Purser, J French, H Orbell, J Lawler
Christmas Lighting Committee (7)	Councillors M Purser, M Field, S Court, G Christy (plus non-Councillors)
Personnel & Admin Committee(3)	Councillors J French, K French + The Mayor, M Purser
Planning Committee (min 6)	Councillors M Purser (Chairman), S Harris, M Field, A Woollard, S Court, G Christy, J Lawler, H Orbell, N Spencer
Town Centre Management & Environmental Enhancement Working Party (3)	Councillors J French, A Woollard, J Lawler, M Field
Band Concert Supervisor	Done on weekly basis per draw held in June each year
Allotment Overseers:	
Peyton Avenue	Councillor K French
Wimblington Road	Councillor G Christy
West End / West End Yardy	Councillor A Woollard, T Taylor
Grandford	Councillor J French
Robingoodfellows Lane	Councillor J Lawler
Bank Account Signatories	Councillors Purser, J & K French, Court
Nat. Savings Signatories	Councillors J French, K French & S Lemmon
MVAS (mobile vehicle activated signs) (3)	Councillors M Field, H Orbell, S Harris
March Events (1)	Councillor J French

Council Representation to Outside Organisations.

March Almshouses & Pensions Charities (3 year term of office)	Mrs Linda Peckett & Mr John Orbell (Re-appointed May 2023)
Cambs & P'boro Association of Local Councils (CAPALC)	Councillor M Purser (although ALL Councillors are invited to attend meetings)
CAPALC Liaison Sub-Committee	Councillor M Purser
CAPALC Assembly Representative	Councillor M Purser
March Educational Foundation (4 year term of office) (3)	Councillor Field (May 2023) Councillor H Orbell (May 2023) Councillor M Purser (May 2023) Councillor C Elkin (May 2020)
Middle Level Commissioners (1)	Councillor J French
Fenland CCTV Liaison Group	Councillor K French (Reserve M Purser)
Young People March (2)	Councillors A Woollard, M Field
March Summer Festival Committee (9)	Councillors [] ** to be confirmed at a later date
Community Rail Partnership	Councillor G Christy
Police Liaison	Councillor K French

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 5 June 2023 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	M Purser G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler N Spencer	M Field K French H Orbell A Woollard
	Cambridgeshire County Councillor	J Gowing	
	Town Clerk	S Lemmon	
	Assistant Town Clerk	S Taylor	
	Public	9	

39 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Harris and Taylor.

40 Thank you to Andy Cornwell and George Campbell Leisure Centre

Andy Cornwell, Sarah and Kaye, Manager and staff from the George Campbell Leisure Centre, were invited to tonight's meeting to express the Town Council's thanks for their recent actions in saving the life of a swimmer at the Leisure Centre. Their quick-thinking, life-saving training and use of a defibrillator had saved the life of a gentleman who had experienced a heart attack whilst swimming. The Town Council commended Andy and his team for their sterling work, which demonstrated the need for first-aid defibrillator training and the importance of defibrillators in the town. The Mayor presented a platter as a token of thanks.

41 Police Update

The next police liaison meeting will take place on 8 June. Minutes will be circulated when available.

42 Planning Applications

Because of her 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes no part in discussions relating to planning matters. Councillor Purser declared an interest and took no part in discussions relating to any of the planning items. Councillor Christy chaired the meeting for the purposes of agenda item 42.

<i>Application Number</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
F/YR21/1497/O	<p>Persimmon Homes</p> <p>Erect up to 1,200 dwellings with associated infrastructure, public open space, allotments/<i>community garden</i>, local centre and primary school, involving the demolition of existing buildings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at Land West of The Avenue, March.</p> <p>Revised proposals – additional information relating to heritage, biodiversity, fire, transport and design changes.</p> <p>Received: 2 May 2023</p> <p>Reply by: 23 May 2023</p> <p>*Cllr Lawler declared an interest in this application and took no part in discussions relating to this application.</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval <i>subject to the comments of the Town Council dated 23 January 2023. In relation to the community garden, this is a much-preferred option to allotments. A community garden will better serve the development and wider community. However, clarity is required regarding the management and maintenance of said garden as the Town Council is keen to ensure that the garden area is always well-maintained and offers biodiversity. The Town Council does not want the burden of maintenance of allotments or the garden. Could the developer secure a bond/other funding to ensure its upkeep? The Town Council is also keen to preserve the site of local hero Jim Hocking's plane crash. FDC to secure adequate s106 contributions.</i></p>
F/YR23/0414/F	<p>Natwest Group, Edinburgh.</p> <p>Alterations to existing building including removal of existing signage, 1 x ATM and 1 x night safe involving in-filling apparatus with brickwork/glass at 18 Broad Street, March.</p> <p>Received; 22 May 2023</p> <p>Reply by; 12 June 2023</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR23/0426/F	<p>Barratt David Wilson Homes Cambridgeshire</p> <p>Agent: A Hodgson, Pegasus Group</p> <p>The formation of 2 x accesses at Wimblington Road/Lambs Hill Drove junction and land at 40 Wimblington Road and associated highways works, and relocation of an access involving the formation of a dropped kerb at 38 Wimblington Road and Land West of 40-74 Wimblington Road, March.</p>

Received: 23 May 2023

Reply by: 13 June 2023

*Cllr K French declared an interest in this application and took no part in discussions.

Recommendation: Approval *subject to* the need for serious consideration to be given to a reduction in the speed limit on Wimblington Road; a reduction in the 60mph limit and traffic calming measures to accommodate vehicles accessing and egressing the proposed developments. Particularly bearing in mind that there will be additional development on the opposite side of the carriageway too. Cycle crossing to be given priority. Arboricultural report to be supported.

F/YR23/0430/F

Mr Brian Hinson, 66 Wimblington Road, March

Agent: Gowler Architectural

Erect a dwelling (single storey, 3-bed) and detached store including the demolition of existing outbuilding and the widening of existing vehicular access, and the formation of a new vehicular access to 66 Wimblington Road at Land South of 66 Wimblington Road, March.

Received: 24 May 2023

Reply by: 14 June 2023

Recommendation; Approval subject to concerns that the new design is detrimental to the street scene compared to the previous design (CP16).

F/YR23/0433/CERTLU

Mr Thomas Jupp, Springfield House, Creek Fen, March.

Certification of Lawfulness (Existing); Occupation of dwelling without compliance with condition 5 of planning permission F/YR04/4362/F, relating to employment tie occupancy at Springfield House, Creek Fen, March.

Received: 24 May 2023

Reply by: 14 June 2023

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR23/0435/VOC

Mr J Chandler and Miss S Yorke, 4A St Peters Road, March.

Variation of condition 08 of planning permission

F/YR22/0234/F (Erect 1 x dwelling (3-storey 4-bed) and associated garden structures incorporating the change of use of existing paddock land to residential garden land) relating to drawing references at Land North of 4 The Causeway, March.

Received: 26 May 2023

Reply by: 16 June 2023

Recommendation; Approval

- F/YR23/0442/F Mr & Mrs Cherry, Causeway House, Granford Drove
Erect a detached 2-storey double garage to existing dwelling at Causeway House, Grandford Drove, March.
Received: 25 May 2023
Reply by: 15 June 2023
Recommendation; Approval
- F/YR23/0453/F Mr John McKay, 160 Burrowmoor Road, March
Erect a single-storey rear extension, first floor rear extension to enable loft conversion for living accommodation, insertion of 3 x dormers to front elevation of existing dwelling and rendering of existing dwelling at 160 Burrowmoor Road, March.
Received; 25 May 2023
Reply by 15 June 2023.
Recommendation; Approval
- F/YR23/0450/F Mr A Henson, 30 Norwalde Street, March.
Agent: Mr R Papworth, March.
Erect 1 x 2 dwelling (2-storey, 2-bed) including part demolition of existing single storey element at 44 Robingoodfellows Lane at Lane North of 44 Robingoodfellows Lane March
Cambridgeshire
Received: 2 June 2023
Reply by: 22 June 2023
Recommendation; Approval
- F/YR23/0455/F Mr Richard Bedford, 32 Boundary Drive, March.
Agent: Russell Payne, March.
Erect a single-storey front extension and a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling, involving the demolition of existing conservatory at 32 Boundary Drive March
Cambridgeshire PE15 9RR
Received: 2 June 2023
Reply by: 23 June 2023
Recommendation; Approval

43 Public Participation

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

44 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

- 15 May 2023 – Annual Meeting
- 22 May 2023 – Christmas Lights Working Party

45 Matters Arising

Re; Annual Meeting – 15 May 2023

Minute 31 – Appointment of Council Representatives

Gary Christy was appointed to represent the Town Council on the Hereward Community Rail Partnership. The Clerk was advised by Wendy Otter at FDC on 25 May that, whilst the works at March Railway Station have now been completed, the March Railway Station Project Board still requires a representative to be appointed as there are still responsibilities for the next 4 years in terms of monitoring and evaluation. There will also need to be discussion about the remaining elements of the March Station Masterplan work that have not yet been completed. Meetings are not likely to be held frequently. Cllr Christy would be very happy to be appointed to the March Station Board Project.

46 Grants & Donations

Two applications had been received for consideration.

- a) Fenland Farmers: a donation was sought to help fund the purchase of a gazebo to assist Fenland Farmers with their many local fund-raising activities and support of local events that benefit the entire community of March. A donation of £770 was proposed by Cllr Spencer and seconded by Cllr J French.
- b) March Armed Forces and Veterans Hub CIC; This application was deferred to a future meeting pending receipt of additional information.

47 Allotments – Information Report and Update

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk presented a report on the town's allotments and advised that a resolution was required to relinquish the West End bypass allotments (3 plots let as one). The site was unkempt and in a dire state and problems were exacerbated by the fact that there were no access routes to the plots (except from the bypass itself which was dangerous and clearly undesirable). As such, these allotments (for which the Town Council pays an annual rental to FDC) were not fit for purpose or suitable to re-let, and it was suggested that they be returned to the District Council, perhaps to be used as a woodland area or orchard. Cllr J French had been in discussions with FDC Assets Team with regard to the future use of the site as woodland, orchard or similar. The current tenancy expired in October.

Cllr K French proposed the relinquishment of the bypass allotments to owners, FDC. This was seconded by Cllr Christy. Cllrs Court, Field and Lawler abstained from voting.

The Clerk reported that the applications to register absolute title at West End Yardy and Grandford had been submitted to HMLR.

Enforcement action would be taken in relation to allotments that were unkempt and the subject of complaints.

Cllr Taylor's considerable expertise in relation to chemicals, pesticides and the new legislation/regulations was available to assist Allotment Overseers.

The closure of Lloyds Bank in October would mean that the Town Council would no longer be able to accept payment of rent by cash or cheque.

48 Summer Band Concerts - Draw

2 July – Cllrs Purser and Christy
9 July – Cllrs Lawler and Orbell
16 July – Cllrs K French and J French
23 July – Cllrs Woollard and Field
30 July – Cllrs Harris and Court
6 August – Cllrs Spencer and Taylor
13 August – Cllrs Orbell and Court
20 August – Cllrs J French and Spencer
27 August – Cllrs Purser and Lawler

The Assistant Clerk distributed packs for each of the events. Cheques would be posted.

49 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

The Clerk reported that all email updates are being circulated on a daily-basis.
Cllr J French and Count had met with the Director Highways and had a successful tour of the area with Cllr Spencer to highlight the dire state of some local roads.
A special meeting had taken place earlier today regarding Estover and County Road speed cushions. Work will be carried out at the end of July 2023 as part of LHI.
Middle Level's proposed dredging of the river in October will be delayed following a bank slippage at the top of Nene Parade, requiring a full river bank survey and stability assessments to be carried out. Silting works would therefore be postponed therefore pending the outcome.
CPE was still on track for next year (possibly September).

Cllr Gowing advised that he was no longer on the Fire Authority Committee, but was now a member of the Police Authority Committee and Constitution and Ethics Committee.

50 Fenland District Council Update

Cllr J French advised that the gas works in Broad Street were now complete. Anglian Water are expected to complete works on 16 June 2023.
Bicycle racks would be reinstated at the Market Place shortly (4 as opposed to the original 6).
Illegal parking on the Market Place outside the Town Hall was being monitored. Ticketing was preferred over double-yellow lining .
Two local businesses had applied for FDC grants.

51 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:30pm.

Councillor M Purser3 July 2023
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 3 July 2023 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	M Purser G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French S Harris N Spencer A Woollard	M Field K French J Lawler T Taylor
	Town Clerk		S Lemmon
	Assistant Town Clerk		S Taylor
	Public		0

54 Apologies

Apologies were received from H Orbell and County Councillor J Gowing.

55 Police Update

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 June were circulated to all councillors on 15 June. Details of future meetings will be circulated in due course. A CCTV liaison meeting was held last week; police had not been made aware of the theft of plants from the town bridge planters. Clerk authorised to liaise directly with the CCTV Control Centre Manager if notified of any further incidents.

56 Planning Applications

Because of her 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

<i>Application Number</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
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- F/YR23/0499/F
- Mr Guy Clandillon, Limetree Close, Westry, March.
Erect 2 x dwellings (2-storey, 4-bed) (part retrospective) at Plots 1 and 3 at Land North of Woodville, Wisbech Road, Westry.
Received; 27 June 2023
Reply by 18 July 2023
*Cllr K French declared an interest in this application and took no part in any discussions.
Recommendation: Approval
- F/YR23/0508/A
- SME Group Middlesex – (KFC)
Display of 3 x internally illuminated signage fascia light boxes, 1 x internally illuminated lettering, 1 x internally illuminated fascia logo box, 2 x internally illuminated double-sided totem signs, 2 x non-illuminated double-sided totem signs and 3 x vinyl signage at 305 Wisbech Road, Westry, March.
Received: 21 June 2023
Reply by: 12 July 2023
*Cllr K French declared an interest in this application and took no part in discussions.
Recommendation: Approval
- F/YR23/0509/F
- Mr John Tufts, Snowmountain Enterprises Ltd, The Oliver Cromwell Hotel, March.
Agent: Lee Bevans Architects Ltd
Change of use of first-floor communal space to 2 x 1-bed flats and new internal staircase, including removal of existing lift and external fire escape at Elliott Lodge, Elliott Road, March.
Received: 19 June 2023
Reply by: 10 July 2023
Recommendation; Approval
- F/YR23/0514/RM
- Mr P Allgood
Agent: Partners in Planning Architecture Ltd, St Ives.
Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission F/YR21/1185/O to erect 9 x dwellings (3-storey, 3-bed) at Land South West of Queen Street Close, March.
Received: 22 June 2023
Reply by: 13 July 2023
Recommendation; Approval

Councillors were advised of a forthcoming FDC planning training session on 19 July which had only 2 places available per town/parish council. In the meantime, Cllr J French advised councillors to familiarise themselves with the 2014 Fenland Local Plan, 2017 March Local Plan, the Emerging Plan as well as other relevant national policies.

43 Public Participation

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

57 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 5 June 2023

Planning Committee – 19 June 2023

Christmas Lights Working Party Committee – 19 June 2023

58 Matters Arising

Re; Annual Meeting – 5 June 2023

Minute 40; The Mayor had delivered the engraved plaques to George Campbell Leisure Centre staff.

59 March Summer Festival

A meeting of the Summer Festival Committee took place on Monday 26 June. A de-brief meeting following the event usually takes place in July, although an earlier meeting was called this year (ahead of tonight's meeting) given that the Event Manager together with other key members of the committee had resigned/retired this year. As such, the future of the Summer Festival event hangs in the balance pending the appointment of a new Event Manager and others to enable the event to be delivered in future years.

An Event Managers Time and Duties Plan/job description has been circulated for these unpaid roles, together with a copy of the Committee's Constitution.

The next AGM would be due to take place in October 2023 but is scheduled to take place on 11 September to see if new appointments can be made and additional officers secured.

This item will be discussed at the meeting of March Town Council on 2 October following the AGM.

60 Accounts – Continued use of Whittings Chartered Accountants LLP

Once again this year, Whittings LLP had acted as Internal Auditors to the Town Council and had completed the Internal Audit Review to enable the Clerk to submit the AGAR to the external auditors. It was proposed by Cllr J French that the Town Council continues to engage the services of Whittings LLP and this was seconded by Cllr K French. The Clerk would make contact with Whittings LLP accordingly to invite them to act on behalf of the Town Council for 2023/2024.

61 Allotments

Cllr T Taylor, accompanied by Cllr J French, had visited the town's allotments and reported his findings to the Town Council. A serious issue had been identified at Grandford which was in a most disappointing state, but, crucially, was plagued with ragwort. As such, the plot needs to begin an expensive cycle of professional spraying and ploughing to eradicate the weed which is harmful to all ruminants. Cllr Christy proposed that Cllr Taylor proceeds with the necessary action forthwith following the giving of notice to the tenant of the works. This was approved unanimously by all councillors.

Ragwort had also been discovered at Robingoodfellows allotments.

There were a number of large plots at Wimblington Road and the Assistant Clerk was tasked with communicating with plot holders to advise them of proposals to subdivide some of the plots to make them more manageable.

62 Planning Guidelines

Guidelines drafted by Cllr Christy had been circulated, but these would be reviewed in conjunction with officers and discussed/approved at the 7 August meeting of the Town Council.

63 Grants Policy, Procedures and Application Form

It had been determined that the Town Council's grants and donations policy and application form would need to be reviewed and updated. Cllr Christy had drafted new paperwork accordingly. This would be reviewed with officers and brought to March Town councillors on 7 August for adoption.

64 Grants/Donations deferred from May meeting – further information requested

Further information had now been received relating to an application submitted by the March Armed Forces Veterans Hub. Whilst a most worthy cause which had received assistance previously from both the Town Council and the Mayor's Charity fund, it was proposed by Cllr Christy and seconded by Cllr Harris that the application be unsuccessful on this occasion. Eight councillors supported this decision. The Assistant Clerk would notify the applicant and advise that future applications would be welcomed.

65 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Cllr J French reported concerns about the timing of the traffic lights on the bridge. A MATS meeting will take place on 12 July and the timings may be tweaked if deemed safe to do so. The new contractors in Broad Street had changed the settings of the lights which were causing significant tail backs from High Street and beyond for motorists travelling north-bound.

The Market Square bicycle racks had apparently been lost by Milestone. New ones are being made and are likely to be installed within 2 weeks.

Three bus routes were being cut by Stagecoach. CCC was working hard to try to save these routes which would impact particularly on those wishing to travel to March from surrounding villages and further restrict already limited public transport provision serving the town of March. Cllr J French is attending a meeting with the Highways on 4 July to seek to retain the routes.

66 Fenland District Council Update

Cllr K French reported that the CCTV control room had been given notice to vacate their offices in Peterborough which had served as their base since December 2019. A new site had been secured and all councillors will be invited to visit the control room in August/September.

Cllr K French proposed that when LHI was next discussed that consideration be given to the installation of new cameras at Mill View (Sainsbury), the lorry park (City Road) and Badgeney Bridge/South Drive.

Cllr J French advised that she was attending a Fenland Community Safety Partnership next week and will request 3 additional cameras be provided at these locations.

Cllr J French is the portfolio holder for the Anglia Revenues Partnership. Action is being taken to tackle a high level of fraudulent claims, predominantly by claimants fraudulently claiming they are single parents.

67 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Councillor M Purser7 August 2023
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 7 August 2023 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	M Purser G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler N Spencer A Woollard	M Field K French H Orbell T Taylor
	Cambridgeshire County Councillor	J Gowing	
	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk	S Lemmon S Taylor	
	Public	4	

70 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Harris.

71 Resignation of Mayor

On 2 August 2023, a letter from the Mayor, Cllr M Purser was circulated to all councillors by the Clerk, advising that Cllr Purser would sadly be retiring from his position as Mayor of March on grounds of ill health. Cllr Purser delivered an outgoing speech to councillors, thanking them for their support and wishing his successor a successful term of office. Cllr Purser would be remaining as a councillor on March Town Council and is committed to working hard for the benefit of the town and our community.

72 Appointment of Mayor

Following the retirement of Cllr Purser as Mayor of March, nominations were invited for a new Mayor to be appointed for the remainder of the 2023/2024 Mayoral term.

Cllr Purser proposed Cllr K French. This was seconded by Cllr Taylor.

Cllr Orbell proposed Cllr Field. This was seconded by Cllr Court.

The decision was taken to the vote, with the majority voting in favour of Cllr K French.

Cllr K French was duly elected as Mayor of March.

73 March Town Council Events/"Christmas Cracker"

Councillors had recently been approached by a member of the public who had enquired as to whether the "Christmas Cracker" senior citizens event organised by March Town Council from 1999 to 2019 could resume. Since a decision had been taken by councillors to discontinue the event, a discussion about the viability of hosting the event once again was therefore required.

The former Clerk to March Town Council, Clive Lemmon, had registered his wish to speak at the meeting with the Clerk on 2 August 2023 (in accordance with the Town Council's Standing Orders) in connection with this agenda item.

Mr Lemmon, who had organised the event from 1999-2019 explained that, whilst Covid-19 was the catalyst for the demise of the event, the event had been losing popularity over many years and numbers were down year-on-year. He presented a number of other factors to councillors for consideration (including retirement of the entertainers, rapidly rising costs, a lack of volunteers, care homes now providing entertainment, retirement of the provider of the sound system, difficulties regarding the classification of "senior citizen", risk assessments and potential SAG requirements) that he had experienced during his time as organiser of the event. He suggested that if the event was to continue, that it be organised by someone other than the Town Council, with the option of a March Town Council grant/donation being available/applied for.

Councillors discussed the various issues at length.

Cllr Spencer advised that a veterans Christmas Lunch had been organised.

Cllr Christy advised that FACT would be organising a Christmas event for senior citizens (date to be confirmed) which would be opened up to residents of the town of March.

Town councillors unanimously voted in favour of the discontinuance of the Christmas Cracker as an event run by March Town Council, but would happily support the FACT-run event.

74 Police Update

There had been no meeting in July due to staff holidays, although July statistics were circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk on 7 August 2023. The next Police Liaison meeting will take place on 11 August 2023.

75 Planning Applications

Because of her 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

Application

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

F/YR22/0835/VOC

Mr J Green, Ely Diocesan Board of Finance c/o Headley Stokes Associates, Huntingdon.

Variation of condition 11 (access), 12 (turning and parking) and 21 (condition listing approved plans) relating to planning permission F/YR19/1106/F (Erect 4 dwellings (4 x 2-storey, 2-bed) and associated works) to enable amendments including; access redesign (including revised turning head and footpath), attenuation pond redesign and creation of pedestrian access to rear of dwellings (resulting in reduction of private gardens to plots 1-3) for full details refer to schedule of amendments at Land East of St Mary's Church Hall, Wisbech Road, Westry.

The revision is; Turning head reinstated and tracking indicated, fence to rear of plots alongside pedestrian access revised to 1.5m high fencing with trellis above.

Received: 19 July 2023

Reply by: 2 August 2023

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR23/0583/F

Mr Melton, SDM Fabrications Ltd c/o Swann Edwards Architecture.

Erect an extension to side and rear of existing building involving the demolition of existing rear extension at 2 Foundry Way, March.

Received: 17 July 2023

Reply by: 7 August 2023

Recommendation; Approval

****Concerns regarding neighbour consultation.**

F/YR23/0593/O

Mr D Sawyer and Mr V Rowbottom c/o Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd.

Erect up to 2 x dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at Land North of 15 Badgeney End, March.

Received: 18 July 2023

Reply by: 8 August 2023

Recommendation; Object

Development outside the development area boundary, dwellings not work-place dwellings, site located within Flood Zone 3.

F/YR23/0611/F

Mr Martin Turner, 52 Eastwood Avenue, March.

Agent: Architektas, London.

Erect a 2-storey side extension and single-storey front and rear extensions to existing dwelling at 52 Eastwood Avenue, March.

Received: 2 August 2023

Reply by: 23 August 2023

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR23/0632/TRTPO

Mr Teodore Pandiyotov, Milestone, Stevenage
SP Landscapes and Tree Contractors, Bury St Edmunds.
Fell 1 x Ash Tree and 1 x Sycamore Tree and works to 7 x
Sycamore Trees, 1 x Ash tree, 6 x Horse Chestnut Trees, 8 x
Elm Trees, 1 x Pine tree, 3 x Hawthorns, 1 x Oak tree, 1 x
Silver Birch tree and 1 x Elder covered by TPO 03/1967 at
Street Record Footpath from Thornton Road to New Park,
March.

Recommendation; Object

**No tree survey submitted. No evidence of disease to justify
the felling of the ash or sycamore. No information as to
requirement for the works.**

F/YR23/0640/F

Mr D Mundy, 50 Manington Place, South Wootton.
Agent: Nick Seaton, Anglia Building Consultants, Outwell.
Erect 2 dwellings (2-storey, 2-bed) at Land West of 19 Alpha
Street, March.

Received: 2 August 2023

Reply by: 23 August 2023

Recommendation; Approval

76 Public Participation

See Minute number 73 (above).

77 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 3 July 2023

Planning Committee – 17 July 2023

78 Matters Arising

Re; Annual Meeting – 3 July 2023

Minute No 65 – The Market Square bicycle racks should be installed this week or next. Two more cycle racks had also been acquired for town.

79 Allotments Update

Cllr Taylor advised that ragwort was prolific this year. However, matters were in hand.

80 Planning Guidelines

Guidelines drafted by Cllr Christy had been circulated to all councillors. These guidelines would serve as a guide to both councillors and members of the public, and would be published on the Town Council's website, once approved. It was proposed by Cllr J French that the guidelines be adopted, and seconded by Cllr Field.

Cllr J French thanked Cllr Christy for his hand in the preparation of this document and the other new and updated policies and procedures.

81 March Town Council Policies & Procedures

In the course of a continuing review of the Town Council's policies and procedures, a number of documents had been circulated to councillors for their consideration, including a (i) new Grants Policy, Guidelines and Application Form, (ii) Procurement Procedure and Policy, (iii) Data Protection and GDPR Policy (iv) Privacy Notice and (v) Complaints Policy.

It was proposed by Cllr Woollard that these be adopted by March Town Council, and this was seconded by Cllr Field.

82 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Cllr J French had recently attended a Community Safety Partnership meeting and a CCC representative advised that funding was available for 3 cameras at Mill View, City Road and Badgeney Bridge/South Drive. Cllr J French to follow this up.

LHI – cushions were installed on both Creek Road and Estover Road last week. These were considered to be wholly ineffective. An official complaint will be lodged and no payment by MTC to be authorised until the situation is remedied.

There was no update as yet on either potholes or the Nene Parade Survey.

Cllr Gowing advised that there was a pilot scheme being launched in Friday Bridge for heat source pumps. A meeting was being held on Tuesday 8 August at Dottie's Tea Rooms.

The library was now trialling a "plus hours" scheme. A press release (including registration details) is expected soon.

Cllr Gowing suggested that MTC fund the Citizens Advice Bureau service operating at Wimblington.

Cllr J French and Cllr Field advised that MTC had given substantial financial assistance to the CAB in the past.

However, CAB had failed to deliver what they had promised under the terms of the Town Council's donation/grants. Cllr J French explained that the CAB already receives a significant sum of money from FDC. Indirectly, MTC continues to fund the service.

83 Fenland District Council Update

The High Street works were progressing well. The dove in the fountain has now fledged and the fountain will be dismantled in the next few weeks. The petition to relocate the fountain will be presented to Cabinet in September, with advice to be taken from Historic England as to the suitability of all locations. The toilets will be demolished earlier than originally planned. Architect's drawings for the new toilets are expected shortly. Temporary toilets are currently being costed and will be installed following demolition, to include a "changing places" toilet that is disability friendly.

84 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:40pm.

Councillor K French4 September 2023
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 4 September 2023 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	K French G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French H Orbell N Spencer A Woollard	M Field J Lawler M Purser T Taylor
	Town Clerk		S Lemmon
	Assistant Town Clerk		S Taylor
	Public		0

87 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Harris and County Cllr J Gowing.

88 Police Update

Minutes of the 10 August 2023 Police Liaison meeting were circulated to all councillors by the Clerk on 27 August 2023. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2023 will be circulated in due course.

89 Planning Applications

Because of her 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

<i>Application</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, Number and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
F/YR21/1497/O	Persimmon Homes Erect up to 1,200 dwellings with associated infrastructure, public open space, allotments/community garden, local centre and primary school, involving the demolition of existing

buildings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at Land West of The Avenue, March.

Revised proposals have been received.

Received: 22 August 2023

Reply by: 12 September 2023

*Cllrs Purser and Lawler declared an interest in this application and left the room when this item was debated.

Recommendation: Approval *subject to* MTC's previous comments dated 21.3.12 and 5.6.23; A community garden is the preferred option over allotments. A community garden will better serve the development and wider community.

Clarity is needed regarding the management and maintenance of said garden, as it needs to be well-maintained and offer biodiversity. MTC does not want the burden of maintenance of allotments (or garden). MTC keen to preserve the site of local hero Jim Hocking's plane crash.

Roundabout to be constructed *prior to* other development for construction traffic.

F/YR23/0658/F

Mr Nigel Davies, Fenland Wind and Air Sports Centre.

Agent: Craig Brand

Erect an equipment storage shed and the formation of a parking area at March Airfield, Cross Road, March.

Received: 29 August 2023

Reply by: 19 September 2023

*Cllr Purser declared an interest in this application and left the room when this item was debated.

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR23/0659/F

Catherine Stephenson, Relax Inn-Station Road Ltd.

Agent: 3D Planning Ltd, Peterborough

Change of use of existing dwelling to a hotel (12-bed) at 42 Station Road, March.

Received: 24 August 2023

Reply by: 14 September 2023

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR23/0696/O

Barratt David Wilson Homes, Cambridgeshire

Agent: Pegasus Group, Histon.

Outline planning permission (all matters reserved, except for access) for up to 425 dwellings (including affordable housing), formation of 2 accesses and a dropped kerb (for 38 Wimblington Road), safeguarded land for grass playing fields, public open space, landscaping, community garden, community orchard, childrens play areas, sustainable drainage infrastructure, retention of informal parking area, all other associated infrastructure and demolition of an existing dwelling (40 Wimblington Road) at Land South of Barkers Land and East of Wimblington Road.

Received: 21 August 2023
Reply by: 11 September 2023
Cllrs K French & Court declared an interest in this application and left the room whilst the item was debated.
Recommendation: Approval *subject to all access roads being substantial and effective traffic calming measures being put in place. Any archaeology comments/recommendations to be observed/ implemented.*

F/YR23/0698/TRCA

Mr Bateman, 18 Gas Road, March.
Works to a Willow Tree within a conservation area at 18 Gas Road, March.
Received: 23 August 2023
Recommendation: Approval

F/YR23/0704/F

Mr & Mrs Simpson, Phoenix House, 1 Church Gardens.
Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling at Phoenix House, 1 Church Gardens, Westry, March.
Received: 30 August 2023
Reply by: 20 September 2023
Recommendation: Approval

90 Public Participation

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

91 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 7 August 2023
Planning Committee – 21 August 2023
Christmas Lights – 21 August 2023

92 Matters Arising

Re; Annual Meeting – 7 August 2023

The FACT organized “Christmas Cracker” will be held on Sunday 10 December 2023.

Re; Christmas Lights – 21 August 2023

Cllr Field and the Clerk were liaising with Lisa Hedges regarding food and fairground rides. More stewards would be required for the event. Cllr J French to speak to Octavious regarding the TRRO for the road closure to enable to Clerk to progress the Switch-on event road closure application with CCC.

93 Grants & Donations

No applications had been received this quarter.

Cllr Christy will put together a press release to better advertise the MTC Grants & Donation opportunity.

94 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Cllr J French reported that 17 new schools would be built within the County, with 1 SEN school to be built in March (opening c.2025)

Cllr J French had attended a peat soil presentation. The local peat soil (as it shrinks) can cause significant damage to roads, such as the 20 Foot bank. 132 local roads are affected which would cost £300 million to repair.

A working party of volunteers including Cllrs J French, K French and Christy has been set up to tidy up the town following the County Council's decision to stop spraying weeds. Great work has been done in cutting back brambles and significant overgrowth. The team are looking to work on Norwood Road and Russell Avenue shortly.

95 Fenland District Council Update

Cllr J French confirmed that CAB receive £55k funding annually from FDC. This is paid to cover the *whole* of Fenland.

FDC will liaise with CAB to ensure that March residents are not wrongfully excluded from using the service.

Cllr Christy has tried to contact CAB to offer them the use of the FACT Community Hub.

Cllrs noted that it was pleasing to see that the former George Pub had been tidied up as it is now for sale once again.

Potential (s215) planning enforcement was discussed at various locations within the town.

Cllr J French advised that CGM (contractors paid to cut grass on behalf of MTC at various locations within the town) were not doing their job. Westry had not been cut at all in 2023! The Clerk had reported this previously to CGM and would contact them again tomorrow.

96 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:40pm.

Councillor K French2 October 2023
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 2 October 2023 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	K French G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French H Orbell T Taylor	M Field J Lawler M Purser A Woollard
	Town Clerk		S Lemmon
	Assistant Town Clerk		S Taylor
	Public		0

99 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Harris, Spencer and County Councillor John Gowing

100 Police Update

Minutes of the 1 September 2023 Police Liaison meeting were circulated to all councillors by the Clerk on 6 September 2023.

101 Planning Applications

Because of her 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

<i>Application</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, Number and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
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It was agreed that two (2) additional planning application would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR23/0266/F	<p>Mr R Skoulding, Upwell Park, March</p> <p>Erect 26 dwellings (20 single-storey 1-bed, 6 single-storey, 2-bed for over 55's) and the formation of an access road and attenuation pond at Land South of 107 Upwell Road, March.</p> <p>Revised proposals application; Amended site layout with changes to the access and a larger turning head with tracking provided – Provision of Ecological Survey and PEA Report.</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval <i>subject to concerns about increased NHS demands</i></p>
F/YR23/0729/F	<p>Mr Kevin Kidman, 52 Wulfstan Way, Cambridge.</p> <p>Erect a dwelling (2-storey 2-bed) (part retrospective) at Land West of 58 New Park fronting Newlands Avenue, March.</p> <p>Received: 18 September 2023</p> <p>Reply by: 9 October 2023</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR23/0754/F	<p>Mr & Mrs White, 79 Burrowmoor Road, March.</p> <p>Erect a 2-storey rear extension to existing dwelling at 79 Burrowmoor Road, March.</p> <p>Received: 20 September 2023</p> <p>Reply by: 11 October 2023</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval <i>subject to concerns about infringement of neighbouring properties right to light.</i></p>
F/YR23/0756/TRTPO	<p>Louiza Powter, Maxey Grounds</p> <p>Works to 2x yew trees covered by TPO 04/1992 at Norfolk Court, Station Road, March.</p> <p>Received: 19 September 2023</p> <p>Reply by: 10 October 2023</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR23/0376/F	<p>Mr Jamie McGarvie, Ashewell Developments, Wimblington.</p> <p>Proposed change of use of agricultural land to horse paddocks and creation of an access road at Land East of The Walnuts, Flagrass Hill Road, March.</p> <p>Received: 29 September 2023</p> <p>Reply by: ASAP</p> <p>*Cllr H Orbell declared an interest in this application.</p> <p>Recommendation: Unable to make recommendation/determination based on lack of information/clarity from the applicant.</p>

F/YR23/0370/O

Mr Tony Byrne, March East Developments Ltd.
Erect up to 130 dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at Land to the South of Barkers Lane, March.

Received: 27 September 2023

Reply by: 11 October 2023

Cllrs K French and G Christy declared interests in this application.

Recommendation: Refusal on highways grounds.

102 Public Participation

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

103 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 4 September 2023

Planning Committee – 18 September 2023

Christmas Lights – 18 September 2023

104 Matters Arising

None.

105 Summer Festival Update

The Summer Festival AGM had taken place on Monday 25 September 2023. Key committee roles still needed to be filled. All roles/job descriptions had been advertised and would continue to be advertised ahead of the next meeting on Monday 9 October whereat it was hoped that the remaining positions would be filled so that a festival could take place in 2025.

106 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Cllr J French updated councillors about the weed and pothole situation and advised that the gullies on the A141 had been cleaned on Thursday.

The Clerk had circulated an email to all councillors with a County Council survey/consultation regarding weeds which all councillors were encouraged to complete.

Cllr J French advised that CGM had still not cut the grass at Westry. The Clerk would once again follow this up.

107 Fenland District Council Update

No updates.

108 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

109 Regalia and Commemorative Coin

Councillors agreed that two commemorative coins be purchased for the Mayoral chain.

110 Confidential Item

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public is excluded from the meeting for item number 111 on grounds that the item involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1-15 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:05pm.

Councillor K French6 November 2023
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 6 November 2023 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	K French G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French H Orbell T Taylor	M Field J Lawler N Spencer
	Town Clerk		S Lemmon
	Assistant Town Clerk		S Taylor
	County Councillor		J Gowing
	Public		0

113 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Harris, Woollard and Purser.

114 Police Update

Minutes of the 9 October 2023 Police Liaison meeting were circulated to all councillors by the Clerk on 23 October 2023. The next meeting will be held on 5 December 2023.

115 Planning Applications

Because of her 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

<i>Application</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, Number and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
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It was agreed that no additional planning application would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR23/0659/F	<p>Catherine Stephenson, Relax Inn – Station Road Ltd. Change of use of existing dwelling to a hotel (12-bed) involving alterations to existing vehicular access at 42 Station Road, March.</p> <p>Revised Proposals; Access and parking revised and further information provided including in relation to how the hotel is proposed to function. Plans have been updated accordingly. Received: 25 October 2023 Reply by: 8 November 2023 Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR23/0806/TRTPO	<p>Mrs Pauline Waddelow, 51 High School Close, March. Works to 2 x Lime Trees covered by TPO 15/1986 at 51 High School Close, March. Received: 19 October 2023 Reply by: 9 November 2023 Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR23/0835/F	<p>Mr Richard Smith, Elm Tree Farm, March. Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling and the insertion of a first-floor side window at Elm Street Farm, Elm Road, March. Received: 27 October 2023 Reply by: 17 November Recommendation: Approval</p>

116 Public Participation

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

117 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 2 October 2023
Personnel and Admin Meeting – 2 October 2023
Planning Committee – 16 October 2023
Christmas Lights – 16 October 2023

118 Matters Arising

Personnel & Admin Meeting – councillors ratified the decision of the sub-committee to increase the Clerk's working hours.

119 Allotment – Update

The Assistant Clerk proposed the establishment of an Allotment group comprising the allotment overseers to deal with the day-to-day allotment issues. The group/forum would be an ideal way to share information, ideas and documentation and Sally would produce a “work-in-progress” spreadsheet for members. Major issues or unusual expenditure would continue to be brought to the full council, however.

Cllr K French suggested that Teams be used rather than email, and she would explore the best options for the group to communicate.

120 Summer Festival Update

The Clerk advised that all the vacant roles on the Summer Festival Committee were now filled and the committee hoped to deliver an “Extravaganza” in 2025, providing smaller events throughout 2024 in order [it was hoped] to secure Arts Council Funding.

The Committee still needed to provide March Town Council with finalised accounts.

Cllr J French reminded those present that the council had resolved that £10,000 of monies that it had paid to the Committee [for an event that was not delivered] was required to be returned to March Town Council forthwith.

The Town Council was prepared to make provision in its budget to ringfence that money for the future.

Cllr J French informed councillors about issues regarding the allocation of Arts Council monies.

The next meeting of the Summer Festival Committee will be held on Monday 15 January 2024.

121 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Cllr J French confirmed that the County Council’s decision to stop weedkilling in the County (introduced without consultation) had finally been reversed on account of the damage caused by weeds to roads etc and their impact on flooding and drainage.

Recent high rainfall events had caused flooding once again in Ellingham Avenue, Gaul Road and Sycamore Close. Anglia Water must accept a good deal of responsibility for this unfortunate state-of-affairs which has continued for too long.

Thanks to the involvement of Cllr J French, works that should have started in April 2023 to try to resolve the issues in these flooding hotspots will commence in April 2024.

122 Fenland District Council Update

Cllr J French advised that the appeal against the District Council’s refusal to grant permission under planning application reference F/YR22/0062/O would be heard on 13 December 2023.

The Town Council had recommended refusal of the application for 110 dwellings on Upwell Road due to over-development, flooding and highway safety. The Town Council's comments were not uploaded to the District Council's planning portal, however.

The Clerk had since submitted its comments and signed minutes directly to the Planning Inspectorate.

Cllr Christy would be attending the hearing in place of Cllr J French and it was hoped that as many of those who had objected to the application would likewise attend to support and voice their concerns.

County Councillor John Gowing would be attending a meeting regarding the new reservoir on Tuesday 7 November.

Cllr Taylor had been advised that the reservoir would require 3 emergency pump-outs per year. This was very concerning seeing that this would be onto already saturated/flooded land?

Once again, Anglian Water had failed to object to this application and was refusing to upgrade sub-standard infrastructure across the District, thereby further increasing the risk of flooding and associated damage within the District/County.

123 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:15pm.

Councillor K French4 December 2023
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 4 December 2023 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	K French G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler M Purser T Taylor	M Field S Harris H Orbell N Spencer A Woollard
	Town Clerk		S Lemmon
	Assistant Town Clerk		S Taylor
	County Councillor		J Gowing
	Public		0

126 Apologies

No apologies were received.

127 Police Update

Minutes of the 9 October 2023 Police Liaison meeting were circulated to all councillors by the Clerk on 23 October 2023. The next meeting will be held on 5 December 2023.

128 Planning Applications

Because of her 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes 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 no additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR23/0949/PIP

Mr John Green, Ely Diocesan Board of Finance, Ely
Permission in Principle to erect 1 dwelling at Land North East
of St Mary's Church, 335 Wisbech Road, Westry.
Received: 16 November 2023
Reply by: 30 November 2023
*Cllr Taylor declared an interest in this item.

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR23/0963/TRTPO

Mr David Wilkins, 18 Wimblington Road, March
Works to Chestnut Tree covered by TPO M/2/465/17 at 18
Wimblington Road, March.
Received: 24 November 2023
Reply by: 15 December 2023

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR23/0975/VOC

Cannon Kirk (UK) Ltd
Variation of conditions 2,3,6 and 7 of planning permission
F/YR20/0473/F (Erection of 9 dwellings comprising 3 single-
storey (1 x 2-bed and 2 x 3-bed) and 6 x 2-storey (3 x 5-bed, 1
x 4-bed and 2 x 2-bed) involving demolition of existing
buildings to enable works to start prior to conditions being
formally discharged at Land North West of 12 Knights End
Road, March.
Received: 23 November 2023
Reply by: 14 December 2023

Recommendation; Approval

129 Public Participation

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

130 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 6 November 2023

Planning Committee – 20 November 2023

Christmas Lights – 20 November 2023

131 Matters Arising

Christmas Lights Minute 20 – The Mayor expressed her upset and disappointment that she had been invited to switch on the Christmas Lights in August but, at the meeting of 20

November, a decision was taken for this honour to be bestowed on someone else, some 4 days prior to the switch-on event. This was both rude and disrespectful and, quite frankly, embarrassing. Councillors agreed that this was a most unsatisfactory situation.

132 Budget

The Clerk presented the proposals for the 2024/2025 budget to councillors, the documents having been circulated to all councillors on 25 November.

Key points to note;

- The budgeted precept ought to allow March Town Council to build reserves during 2024/25.
- Due to the possibility of the FDC tax base estimate changing, it will only be possible to approve the budget in principle at this stage and either amend or ratify it in January.
- The Town Council continues to support March Town FC Estover CIC (although this liability will cease following the final payment in November 2024), CCTV, March Museum, March Street Pride and March Events. There is no provision in the budget for the March Summer Festival as there will be no festival in 2024.

It was proposed by Cllr Woollard and seconded by Cllr Christy that the budget be accepted, with all councillors voting unanimously in favour (subject to any amendment required to reflect a change in the FDC council tax base).

133 CCTV Renewal

The current Service Level Agreement in place for the provision of March Town centre CCTV is due for renewal. The Shared Service CCTV Manager at Fenland District Council has confirmed that the financial contribution payable by March Town Council remains unchanged (at £16,110.00 per annum) for 2024-2027.

Councillors resolved unanimously to continue to provide funding to the Safer Fenland CCTV for the next 3 years (Proposer G Christy, Seconder J French).

134 Grants & Donations

Three (3) applications had been received;

Fenland Wildlife Charity- Councillors awarded this new local charity a donation of £500.00.

March Defibrillators – Due to the immense benefit of having almost 50 AEDs in the town and the rapidly rising costs of replacements and maintenance, it was determined that instead of awarding the charity a quarterly donation, an annual “specific donation” would be paid to this cause in the sum of £1,000 to contribute to the cost of new and replacement units, batteries and pads that were helping to save lives of residents and visitors to the town.

Magpas Air Ambulance – The application could not be accepted/considered since it was not properly completed or supplied with the necessary supporting documentation.

135 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

There is a growing problem locally of vehicles parking on grass verges. These vehicles are not “abandoned” so they cannot be dealt with or removed by the police.

Cllr J French is attending a Highways and Transport meeting tomorrow and will seek an update and details of how the County Council proposes to tackle this problem.

Civil Parking Enforcement is moving forward slowly.

136 Fenland District Council Update

The town centre regeneration project is ahead of schedule and currently under-budget.

March Town Council will be consulted in relation to the underspend. Monies could be used to improve the area outside of Iceland. Additional CCTV units could be considered.

Cllr J French advised that there will be lit trees within the Town Centre.

Grants would be available for all town centre buildings to paint and upgrading their exteriors.

137 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:50pm.

Councillor K French8 January 2024
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 8 January 2024 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	K French G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler M Purser T Taylor	M Field A Woollard H Orbell N Spencer
	Town Clerk		S Lemmon
	Assistant Town Clerk		S Taylor
	County Councillor		J Gowing
	Fenland District Council		M Wright, P Hughes
	Public		1

140 Apologies

No apologies were received.

141 Broad Street and Christmas Lights Presentation by Fenland District Council

Matt Wright and Phil Hughes of FDC attended the meeting to update councillors on progress with the Broad Street regeneration project and present the options available for the new Christmas Lights. Owing to the Broad Street regeneration and the new road layout, many of the Town Council's Christmas lights (such as the catenary lights) are no longer fit for purpose. FDC had budgeted to replace the lights hitherto used in Broad Street. Atkins had been contracted to prepare design options for the Town Council to consider. Councillors resolved for FDC to instruct Atkins to deliver the lights package. Realistically, the lights would need to be ordered by March for November 2024 delivery and installation. FDC and Atkins representatives to attend the January or February meeting of the Christmas Lights Working Party Committee.

142 Police Update

Minutes of the 5 December 2023 would be circulated shortly. The next meeting is to be confirmed.

143 Planning Applications

Because of her 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

<i>Application</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, Number and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
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It was agreed that no additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR23/1047/F	Mr R Fisher, RFGM Ltd, Badgeney Road, March. Erect a workshop and garage for B2 (General Industry) use with associated hardstanding at Land North of 35-37 Thorby Avenue, March.
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Received: 2 January 2024

Reply by: 23 January 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR23/1058/F	Mr John Collins, Land adjacent to Hampton House, Middle Road. Change of use of land to gypsy and traveller residential use including the siting of 1 mobile home, 1 touring caravan and to erect a single-storey dayroom including 2.4 m high (max) gates at Land North West of Hampton House, Middle Road, March.
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Received: 2 January 2024

Reply by: 23 January 2024

Recommendation; Approval

Cllr Taylor as an aside advised councillors that he was part of a much -needed and newly formed drainage advisory committee in partnership with FDC. More details to follow shortly.

144 Public Participation

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

145 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

146 Budget Ratification

There had been a small change to the Council Tax Base (which had increased from 6,830 to 6,841 in December 2023). Accordingly, the precept calculations had been adjusted slightly (from £52.71 to £52.62 per property for 2024/2025).

No changes had been made to the budget.

The budget and precept were duly ratified (proposer M Purser, seconder G Christy, all voted in favour apart from M Field (abstention)).

147 Local Highways Improvements

The deadline for submission of applications was 12 January 2024.

Since there were 2 County Council division and 3 County Councillors, it was possible to apply for 2 schemes for 2024/25.

Cllr J French proposed the following locations for Double Yellow Lines;

Princes Walk, Riverbank Close (off Gaul Road), Elm Road near the BRASA/Railway Station, Gaul Road (bypass end), Wisbech Road (Harradines offices), Hillside Road near the Post Office.

Cllr Field recommended lining at the junction of Wigstones and St Johns Road.

The second scheme, proposed by Cllr J French, involved the installation of a chicane or other speed reduction measures on Norwood Avenue.

Cllrs voted unanimously in favour of the 2 schemes.

Clerk to complete and submit the application.

148 “March as a Transition Town”

Cllr Field presented a motion to councillors. Councillors voted against the motion 6:4.

149 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Civil Parking Enforcement was progressing in spite of a £500,000 short fall.

Flooding has been a major issue locally and nationally. Sadly, there had been a very poor response from the relevant agencies for flood victims.

However, Cllr Taylor was thanked for his valuable support and assistance to flood victims across the town and the new flooding/drainage committee was welcomed and would play a vital role in the planning process going forward.

County Councillor J Gowing advised that there were proposals to close Manea, Sutton and Kimbolton Fire Stations. This would affect March in so far as March station would cover the

Manea area and there was a need for more volunteers to the service, especially volunteers available in the day time.

150 Fenland District Council Update

FD looked set to announce a 0% increase in Council Tax for 2024/25.

151 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:00pm.

Councillor K French5 February 2024
Mayor of March.

148. Motion to March Town Council

March as a Transition Town

This council observes that, like so many towns in the UK, the combined effects of economics, social change and new technology have had a big impact on the business in the town and there is a widespread feeling in the community that March is in decline and that something should be done about it.

We note that despite the frequent calls for action that there are not always reciprocal amounts of members of the public coming forward to volunteer to put things right. However, there are a number of very dedicated people who give up considerable amounts of their time to work towards trying to make small improvements in the town and to benefit the community.

This council would like to be involved in spearheading the regeneration of March and at the same time re-energise the community to get involved in taking positive action to transform our community and environment and put March on the path to increasing prosperity, and happiness.

We understand that Transition Towns is a movement that has been growing since 2005. Community-led Transition groups are working for a low-carbon, socially just future with resilient communities, more active participation in society, and caring culture focused on supporting each other.

This council will :

I. organise a public meeting for the purpose of introducing the concept of March as a Transition Town.

II. fund the cost of the venue and promotion of the meeting.

III. encourage the progress of the development of our Transition Town according to the wishes of the public meeting.

IV. register a Transition Hub with the Transition Network and facilitate the work of the Transition organisation within the town.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 5 February 2024 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	K French G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French H Orbell T Taylor	M Field J Lawler N Spencer
	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk		S Lemmon S Taylor
	County Councillor		J Gowing
	Public		0

154 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Purser and Woollard.

155 Police Update

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 7 February 2024.

156 Planning Applications

Because of her 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

<i>Application</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, Number and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
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It was agreed that 1 (one) additional planning application would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR23/0696/O

Barratt David Wilson Homes Cambs

Pegasus Group (Agent)

Outline planning permission (all matters reserved, except for access) for up to 425 dwellings (including affordable housing), formation of 2 accesses, and a dropped kerb (for 38 Wimblington Road), safeguarded land for grass playing fields, public open space, landscaping, community garden, community orchard, children's play areas, sustainable drainage infrastructure, retention of informal parking area, all other associated infrastructure and demolition of an existing dwelling (40 Wimblington Road) at Land South of Barkers Lane and East of Wimblington Road, March.

Revised Proposals; response to statutory consultees including framework plan, design and access statement, ecology and biodiversity, tree survey, ground conditions phase 1, noise assessment, air quality assessment, flood risk assessment, highways technical note, junction capacity technical note, public transport note, LVIA and landscape master plan and covering letter from agent.

Received: 18 January 2024

Reply by: 1 February 2024

*Cllr K French declared an interest in this item and did not participate in discussions or vote on the application.

Recommendation; Objection – Flooding and drainage concerns, conservation, unsatisfactory active travel findings.

F/YR24/0041/F

Mr & Mrs Richmond, 9 Richmond Avenue, March

Erect 2 single-storey rear extensions to existing dwelling at 9 Richmond Avenue.

Received; 24 January 2024

Reply by: 14 February 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0053/TRCA

March Cruising Club

Works to 1 pear tree in a conservation area at March Cruising Club, West End, March.

Received: 25 January 2024

Reply by: 15 February 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0046/O

Mr Patrick Wilkinson, 1 Wigstones Road, March.

Erect 1 dwelling (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) involving demolition of existing garage at Land North of 1 Wigstones Road, March.

Received: 2 February 2024

Reply by: 23 February 2024

Recommendation; Objection – over-development, parking issues.

157 Public Participation

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

158 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 8 January 2024

Personnel and Admin Committee 16 January 2024

Planning Committee – 22 January 2024

Christmas Lights Working Party – 22 January 2024

159 Matters Arising

- Main Meeting – Minute 141 See Minute **160** (post)
- Main Meeting – Minute 147 The Clerk had submitted the Town Council's applications on 11 January.

160 Christmas Lights Update

Atkins representatives would not be attending a Christmas Lights Working Party Committee meeting. However, Councillors K French and J French and the Clerk had met with FDC and Atkins via a Teams Meeting on 31 January 2024 to discuss the various options and delivery of the new festive lights package. Time is of the essence to get the order placed for Autumn delivery and installation.

161 Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS) Update

Cllr J French, by way of background, advised those present that MVAS was a former LHI scheme and the information gathered was traditionally shared with the police every fortnight or so.

Cllrs Field and Orbell reported that there had been issues with the batteries.

Cllr J French will investigate replacement options and cost implications and report back to council next month to determine whether we can source replacement batteries or new hardware, which was nearing end-of-life.

Cllr Orbell suggested that a fourth member be appointed to the MVAS team as there were logistical difficulties with coordinating all three existing members at one time given everyone's different working patterns and busy lives.

Matters to be revisited in March.

162 Farming & Flooding Quarterly Update

Cllr Taylor updated councillors on the work of the group's activities and involvement in matters such as the weed motion and assisting Middle Level Commissioners with local drainage issues.

The group is comprised of farmers, small-holders, agricultural machinery manufacturers, bee-keepers to name but a few, with all outdoor projects falling under their remit.

163 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

County Councillor Gowing updated those present on the proposals to close the fire station at Manea (which would then be covered by March [and others]). The proposal is unpopular with residents, but volunteers available in the day time are desperately needed to prevent closure. Cllr Gowing is attending a meeting in two weeks' time and will update March Town Council next month.

Cllr J French met with Highways and Transport last week. The Chair apologised for introducing the (now revoked) weeds policy without consultation which had proven to be to be both damaging and a false economy.

164 Fenland District Council Update

Cllr J French provided a number of updates;

Sycamore, Gaul Road and Ellingham Flooding – permission has now been sought from FDC to have a compound on the Gaul Road Park to start the necessary works in 2-3 weeks' time. The pump in Sycamore cannot cope with the surface water run-off.

MATS – Following a meeting last week, progress was being made at Hostmoor Avenue, Peashill Road is being upgraded and land issues at Hobbs Lot have been resolved.

It is confirmed that there is to be a SEN school built on Kingswood Avenue, March.

Broad Street – Completion date (latest) is 21 October 2024. The Remembrance Parade has been organised accordingly.

There had been an under-spend on the project and monies would be allocated to improving the area outside Iceland.

The March Events new online booking for would go live shortly.

The Upwell Road Planning Appeal had been lost. Residents were very unhappy with this outcome and were encouraged to object at the Full/Reserved Matters application stage.

165 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:40pm.

Councillor K French4 March 2024
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 4 March 2024 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	K French G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler N Spencer AWoollard	M Field S Harris H Orbell M Purser
	Town Clerk		S Lemmon
	Assistant Town Clerk		S Taylor
	County Councillor		J Gowing
	Public		0

168 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Taylor.

169 Police Update

Minutes for the February meeting will be circulated in due course. Unfortunately, Andy Morris is leaving the force. The next meeting is in April.

170 Planning Applications

Because of her 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

<i>Application</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, Number and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
--------------------	---

It was agreed that no additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR24/0103/VOC

Mrs June Clark, 107 Whittlesey Road, March.
Removal of condition 2 of planning permission M/73/98/F
(Erection of an agricultural bungalow and garage) relating to
removal of agricultural tie at Prospect Bungalow, 107
Whittlesey Road.
Received: 19 February 2024
Reply by: 11 March 2024
Recommendation: Approval

F/YR24/0115/F

Fenland District Council
Erect a single-storey toilet block at Land South West of 2
Broad Street, March.
Received: 21 February 2024
Reply by: 13 March 2024
Recommendation; Approval

171 Public Participation

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

172 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 5 February 2024
Planning Committee – 19 February 2024
Christmas Lights Working Party – 19 February 2024

173 Grants & Donations

Prior to discussions commencing, the Clerk advised Councillors that £1,270.00 had already been spent during the current financial year under this budget heading. The amount provided within the budget had been £2,500.00.

Two applications for funding had been received from March Library and CamSAR.

Councillors voted to award March Library the sum of £500 (as requested), but determined not to make an award to CamSAR on the basis of the financial information provided and the availability of alternative funding streams.

174 Regalia

Cllr K French proposed the purchase of both cadet and outgoing mayoral badges. Various options had been explored and it was cheaper to buy in bulk. This was seconded by Cllr Christy.

175 Mayor and Deputy Mayor Nominations

It was proposed by Councillor K French and seconded by Councillor Purser that Councillor Christy be nominated for the post of Mayor for 2024-2025.

Councillor Christy indicated his willingness to stand and such nomination was unanimously approved.

It was then proposed by Councillor Christy and seconded by Councillor K French that Councillor Woollard be nominated for the post of Deputy Mayor for 2024/25.

Councillor Lawler further nominated Councillor Field, seconded by Councillor Court.

Councillors voted 7:4 in favour of Councillor Woollard taking on the role of Deputy Mayor.

176 Outside Body Memberships

Former Town Councillor, Clinton Elkin had approached the Town Council as his 4-year period on the committee of the March Educational Fund was drawing to an end. He was keen to remain on the committee and Town Councillors voted in favour of his remaining, to help deliver the great work of the charity. Councillors Orbell and Field are also on the Committee. A decision to potentially appoint a further member to the committee would be taken at the next meeting.

177 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

The budget had been set last month with a 4.9% increase.

Phase 1 of works to combat flooding at Sycamore Close commenced today. Gaul Road Park was being used as a compound.

Cllr Gowing updated Councillors in relation to Manea Fire Station. There is a webinar on 6 March but any decisions look set to be deferred since the current Fire Chief is retiring.

178 Fenland District Council Update

Cllr J French advised that the budget had been set last week.

Details had been circulated about the £10k Rural England Prosperity Fund.

A press release was expected to celebrate the qualification of FDC's apprentice.

Emergency repair works were underway to address the void discovered on Dartford Road.

Cllr J French had had discussions with FDC about a flag pole in Broad Street for D-Day in June. The Clerk would purchase an official commemorative flag for the occasion.

Cllrs K French, Spencer and Christy will make arrangements for this event.

The St Georges Day Fayre takes place on 21 April. It will feature a St George-themed writing competition involving 4 schools with prizes for all age categories.

179 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:15pm.

Councillor K French8 April 2024
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 8 April 2024 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	K French G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler N Spencer T Taylor	M Field AWoollard H Orbell M Purser
	Town Clerk		S Lemmon
	Assistant Town Clerk		S Taylor
	County Councillor		J Gowing
	Public		0

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Harris.

2 Police Update

No update.

3 Planning Applications

Because of her 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes 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 no additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR24/0108/F

Ms Lindsey Wilkie, 59 Elwyn Road, March.

Erect a detached double garage to existing dwelling at 59 Elwyn Road, March.

Revised Proposals; removal of storage area above garage.

Received: 21 March 2024

Reply by: 4 April 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0219/F

Mr G Harradine, 19 The Avenue, March.

Change of use from Education Centre (F1) to 9 dwellings (1 x 3-bed 2-storey, 4 x 2-bed and 4 x 1-bed flats) involving partial demolition of existing building and installation of front boundary fence and gate (1.8m high max) at 34A Station Road, March.

Received: 19 March 2024

Reply by: 9 April 2024

*Cllr Christy declared an interest in this item and took no part in discussions or voting.

Recommendation: Approval - *although the Town Council wishes to know the developer's intention regarding the trees on site.*

F/YR24/0232/O

Mrs Pauline Robertson

Erect up to 3 dwellings (outline application with matters committed of access) involving demolition of existing dwelling and widening of West End at 115B West End March.

Received: 21 March 2024

Reply by: 11 April 2024

Recommendation; Objection – inappropriate development, incongruous to the riverside and character of the area. Concerns regarding light, access and infrastructure.

F/YR24/0238/F

Mr Gordon MacFarlane, 117 Cavalry Drive, March.

Erect a single-storey extension to rear of existing garage to form workshop/office including installation of solar panels at 117 Cavalry Drive, March.

Received: 20 March 2024

Reply: 10 April 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0254/PIP

Mr Brownlow & Ms Davies, Gordon Avenue, March
Permission in Principle to erect up to 9 dwellings at Brownlows
Yard, 400 Creek Road, March.

Received: 27 March 2024

Reply by: 10 April 2024

*Cllr Taylor declared an interest in this item and took no part in
discussions or voting.

Recommendation; Approval

***Comment; The Town Council hopes that a s106 will be
required as per the Neighbourhood Plan, given that the
total number of dwellings to be delivered by the developer
shall exceed ten. Continuing concerns over flooding.**

4 Public Participation

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

5 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 4 March 2024

Planning Committee – 18 March 2024

Christmas Lights Working Party – 18 March 2024

6 Matters Arising

Main Meeting - 4 March - Minute 176 (Outside Body Membership); Cllr Field advised that a potential new March Education Fund committee member had been identified. Once confirmed, details would be forwarded to the Town Council for approval.

7 Recognition Report

Cllr K French nominated Cllr J French to receive the award of *Honorary Freedom of the Town of March*. Only two such awards have ever been bestowed by the Council.

Cllr J French, 5 times Mayor of March, has tirelessly and selflessly served the town for over 30 years, helping the vulnerable, advocating for the youth and armed forces, running committees to deliver wonderful community events in the town, providing FACT with its first fridge.

All councillors voted in favour of the much-deserved award.

The scroll would be presented in July.

8 St Georges Writing Competition

Whilst the competition was a March Events activity, the writing competition was supported by the Mayor and Town councillors, and, as such, councillors had been asked to judge the entries for the various age groups. Eleven prizes in total would be presented.

9 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

- Flooding issues at Sycamore – works at Sycamore Close were now complete. Works at Ellingham Avenue would commence shortly, with Gaul Road forming Phase 3.
- LHI – The Clerk had received the draft feasibility report from CCC regarding Norwood Avenue. The Town Council had accepted the contribution and optimum traffic calming measures identified (speed humps). The next step would be for the application to be heard at the District Member Panel Day on 24 April. Cllr J French stressed the need for all residents to be on board with potential LHI applications.
- Cllr J French advised that a trust had been set up for the new SEN school at Kingswood Park, due to open in 2026/2027.

10 Fenland District Council Update

- Cllr J French advised that FDC had a new interim Head of Planning and the newly appointed Head of Planning would be in post in June/July. Extra planning meetings had been scheduled to tackle the backlog of applications.
- The Broad Street project was currently on schedule. At a meeting of the Steering Group on Friday, it had been announced that there was an underspend that would be available for *capital* expenditure, with any monies to be spent on projects in and around the town centre. A number of projects/enhancements had been mooted. Councillors to forward further suggestions to Cllrs J French and Woollard (members of the Steering Group) for further discussion and a decision in due course.
- The Broad Street Steering Group had also discussed a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially mark the completion of the project and celebrate the opening of the re-vamped town centre. Suggestions for the nature and timing of this event to be forwarded to Cllrs J French and Woollard (as above).
- Cllr Spencer provided councillors with an update on the arrangements for the March Town Council lighting of the beacon to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day on 6 June 2024. Many local businesses were generously providing their services free of charge. The event on West End Park will commence at 1930 and there will be food stalls and a bar, a number of WWII displays and vehicles, musical accompaniment by March Brass, a parade at 2100 followed by the D-Day reading, lighting of the beacon by the Mayor of March and National Anthem. All councillors to attend.

11 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

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

Councillor K French22 April 2024
Mayor of March.

March Town Council

Minutes of the Main Meeting (formerly “**Annual Assembly**”) of
March Town Council that took place at 7.15pm in The Skoulding
Suite at March Town Hall on Monday 22 April 2024

Present	Councillor	K French G Christy	Town Mayor Deputy Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler M Purser	M Field T Taylor H Orbell
	Town Clerk Asst Town Clerk		S Lemmon S Taylor
	Public		0

12 Introduction

The Clerk and Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting formerly known as the “Annual Assembly”. Going forward, the meeting held at this time would be known and regarded as a regular Main Meeting, since there was no legal requirement to hold an Annual Assembly.

13 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Harris, Spencer and Woollard.

14 Police Update

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 April 2024 (together with a copy of the presentation delivered) were circulated to all councillors on 15 April 2024. Cllr Christy will attend the next meeting on 10 May 2024.

15 Minutes of Meetings

The following minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor;

Annual Assembly - 17 April 2023
Main Meeting – 8 April 2024

16 Matters Arising from the above Minutes

Cllr J French wished to formally thank Cllr Orbell for her efforts in relation to the St George Day writing competition, and to the Mayor for her financial contribution for the prizes from the Mayors Charity Fund.

17 Report of the Town Mayor for 2023 / 2024 and the Mayor's Charity Donations

The Mayors Report was accepted by the meeting and is attached to these minutes as Appendix A (3 pages).

The Mayor had distributed donations from the Mayors Charity Account totalling £3,150.00 to causes of her choice.

The Mayor's Charity Account is attached (Appendix B – 1 page).

18 Written Report of the Town Clerk for 2023 / 2024

The written report of the Town Clerk, as previously circulated, was accepted by the meeting (see Appendix C – 4 pages).

19 Affirmation re Mayor's Allowances

The Mayor, Councillor Kim French, affirmed that the Mayoral expenses received during this year of office and totalling £3,450.00p per annum had been fully expended in the execution of her Mayoral duties.

20 Resolution to Approve the Annual Governance Statement

It was noted that the Personnel and Administrative Sub-Committee had undertaken a full review of the effectiveness of our systems of internal control on 16 January 2024. It had also fully reviewed all general risks likely to be faced by March Town Council and all procedures included within the MTC risk assessment document. All the findings were ratified by Full Council on 5 February 2024.

Members re-affirmed their approval of the procedures adopted to satisfy themselves of the effectiveness of the systems of internal control currently in place.

The Annual Governance Statement was then discussed as follows:

- a) Its contents were reviewed and completed as appropriate.
- b) It was proposed by Councillor K French and seconded by Councillor Orbell, with all in favour, that its contents were approved.

- c) The resolution to accept the Annual Governance Statement was, therefore, unanimously approved.
- d) The Clerk and Chairman duly signed and dated such Statement.

21 Resolution to Approve the Accounting Statements for 2023 / 2024

The Annual Accounting Statements for the financial year 2023 / 2024, as previously circulated, were presented to the meeting by the Responsible Financial Officer to allow full discussion by Councillors.

After such discussions, the following decisions were reached:

- a) It was proposed by Councillor J French and seconded by Councillor Christy, with all in favour, that such Accounting Statements be approved.
- b) The resolution to accept the Accounting Statements for 2023 / 2024 was, therefore, unanimously approved.
- c) The Mayor, Councillor Kim French duly signed and dated such document as necessary.

22 Planning Applications

Because of her 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 declares a permanent personal interest and takes no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

<i>Application Number</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
-------------------------------	--

It was agreed that 2 additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR/23/0376/F

Jamie McGarvie, Ashewell Developments, Wimblington.
Change of use of agricultural land to equestrian use and the formation of an access road (part-retrospective) at Land East of The Walnuts, Flaggrass Hill Road, accessed from Creek Fen, March.

Revised Proposals; Amended biodiversity checklist and submission of water vole assessment.

Received: 8 April 2024

Reply by: 22 April 2024

*Cllr Orbell declared an interest in this item and took no part in discussions/voting.

Recommendation; Approval - subject to all advised conditions and applicant's agreements and the robust enforcement thereof.

F/YR24/0270/F	<p>Mr S Rutterford, 63 Elwyn Road, March.</p> <p>Erect a block of 5 x industrial units and a detached industrial shed (Class B2) involving the demolition of existing buildings (part retrospective) at 38 Whittlesey Road, March.</p> <p>Received: 10 April 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 1 May 2024</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval – subject to satisfactory surface water attenuation measures/proposals.</p>
F/YR24/0275/F	<p>Mr G Sharman, 9 Babble Close, March.</p> <p>Change of use of existing dwelling to mixed use to include erection of a single-storey detached building for the use of a dog grooming business at 9 Babble Close, March.</p> <p>Received: 12 April 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 3 May 2024</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval</p>
F/YR24/0284	<p>Green King, Bury St Edmunds</p> <p>Installation of 2 pergolas at 9 Acre Road, March.</p> <p>Received: 11 April 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 2 May 2024</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval</p>
F/YR24/0292/F	<p>One Wisbech Road March Ltd, London</p> <p>PR Architects Ltd, Manchester</p> <p>Erect a Drive-Thru Café, automated carwash and substation with associated parking spaces and 6 EV charging points at Land North of 305 Wisbech Road, March.</p> <p>Received: 17 April 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 8 May 2024</p> <p>Recommendation; Refusal – serious concerns regarding drainage and flooding. Lack of information addressing this.</p>
F/YR24/0313/F	<p>Mr & Mrs Dickerson, 103 Elwyn Road, March.</p> <p>Erect a single-storey extension involving demolition of existing conservatory at 103 Elwyn Road, March.</p> <p>Received: 16 April 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 7 May 2024</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval</p>

F/YR24/0320/TRCA

Mrs Pauline Wright/Lloyds Banking Group
Fell 1 x Ash Tree within a conservation area at 37 West
End, March.
Received: 17 April 2024
Reply by: 8 May 2024
*Cllr Lawler declared an interest in this item and took no
part in discussions/voting.
Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0293/A

One Wisbech Road March Ltd, London.
Display of 8 Advertisements (2 internally illuminated
fascia signs and 6 vinyl signs) at Land North of 305
Wisbech Road.
Received: 17 April 2024
Reply by: 8 May 2024
**Recommendation: Refusal (see above recommendation
to refuse the linked main application)**

F/YR24/0296/A

Nationwide Building Society, Swindon
Display 4 signs (1 internally illuminated projecting sign, 1
internally illuminated fascia sign, 1 internally illuminated
ATM sign and 1 window vinyl) at 22 Broad Street, March.
Received: 18 April 2024
Reply by: 9 May 2024
Recommendation; Approval

23 **Payments List**

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 20:15.

Councillor Christy.....
Mayor of March

13 May 2024

Appendix A

Following Councillor Purser stepping down from Mayor in August 2023, I was asked to step in for the remainder of the term. This was mainly due to the recent election and addition of new Councillors, and having the ability to hit the ground running immediately.

Like all previous terms, it was again a privilege to be elected as the Mayor of March for the year of 2023/2024.

As in previous years, I was fortunate to be able to attend some great events in this nine-month term.

The first task in my term was organising the VIP attendees and area for the MAFF. This was another great event and very well attended by both the public and VIPs from other towns and cities.

Mid-September I attended the Civic Service for Ramsey, along with my deputy Cllr Christy. This is always a lovely town and venue to attend.

We were able to attend the Civic Service for Whittlesey at the beginning of October, and I held my first fund-raising event on Sunday 29th October, with afternoon tea at March Golf Club. A huge amount of funds were raised at this event and I very much appreciated everyone's support for the event.

Unfortunately, due to low numbers, the MTC Civic Service had to be postponed to 2024 when more attention could be given to organising the event.

Ian and I were honoured to attend Madingley's Remembrance Service at the American Cemetery on the 10th November. It was a beautiful service and surroundings.

On the morning of the 11th November, I laid a wreath on behalf of the town at St Peter's Church, where we had a small service.

On the afternoon of the 11th November, we had the honour of hosting the High Sherrif of Cambridgeshire. The Exchange Tea Parlour put on a lovely spread and we had a small gathering where Dr Bharatkumar Khetani and his wife Pritty presented a number of High Sherrif Awards.

The town also welcomed back the MTC Remembrance Parade on Sunday 12th November. It was slightly different this year due to the regeneration works in Broad Street, but it was very well attended.

Sunday 17th of December I held the Mayor's Carol Service, which again as very well attended.

Ian and I were invited to the 1220 Air Cadets Presentation evening at St Wendredas Church on the 26th January. It was lovely to see so many cadets take part in so many competitions across the county.

Generally, January was a quiet month as we were gearing up for the Mayor's Charity Ball on Friday 9th February. We had 150 attend the evening and a huge sum of money was raised for the Mayor's Charities. Thank you to all those that attended and contributed to the evening.

I held the MTC Civic Service on Sunday 3rd March at St Mary's Church. It was a lovely service headed by Rev Andrew Smith. It was pleasing to see so many visitors from outside of March attend.

Thursday 7th March I was invited to All Saints School by Cllr Hannah Orbell for World Book Day. Gosh - it was brilliant to see so many children dress up and tell the audience which books they enjoyed reading and who they were dressed as.

On Friday 8th March I had the honour of attending the International Women's Day event at Neale-Wade Community College. This was led by Rev Ruth Clay of St Wendredas Church and Karen Beckwith of the March Rotary Club. More than 150 delegates attended and it was a very inspirational day.

Saturday 23rd March, we attended the Whittlesey Charity dinner and had the pleasure of the company of some other visiting Mayors and Chairs. I understand Cllr Mayor raised a huge sum for her charities.

On Friday 5th April, Ian and I were able to visit the 1220 Air Cadets at their squadron parade evening. Here we gained a better understanding of what the cadets have been up to and the awards they have gained. We presented them with a cheque from the Mayor's Charity. They said that the funds would allow them to purchase additional IT equipment to aid their assessments and courses required, plus some new equipment too.

Saturday 13th April Ian and I attended the Godmanchester Civic Service and had a lovely time helping Cllr Rooker raise funds for his chosen charities.

Sunday 14th April Ian and I met up with the Fenland Sappers. They were off to Normandy to paint a bridge for the week on behalf of the Royal Engineers Association. I donated £500 to them from my Mayor's Charity Funds as a thank you for all of their support within the community and supporting me and Ian throughout our Mayoral years. I understand from the report, news and social media that everything went to plan and they all had an enjoyable time.

Saturday 20th April we attended, along with other Mayors and Chairs, the Huntingdon's branch of the St George's Association. It was a lovely evening and we were lucky enough to have our evening meal in the beautiful surroundings of Huntingdon Town Hall. A slightly wonky room, but lovely nonetheless!

Sunday just passed we attended the St George's Festival organised by the March Events committee. I had the honour of opening the event and announcing the winners of the Writing

Competition headed by Cllr Hannah Orbell. From my Mayoral funds I donated a sum of money to purchase the winners some gifts. I hope, with the items they received, it'll inspire the children to continue writing. Thank you to Hannah for organising this.

There are a few more weeks to go until my Mayoral term ends, and I have planned to attend a few more events, including visiting St Ives and Huntingdon.

Throughout the nine months of fund-raising, Ian and I have raised £3,150 to distribute to our chosen charities. As you can see from the schedule, they mostly consist of youth groups and local organisations.

Thank you to all those who helped with fund raising, organising and supporting Ian and I in this nine-month term.

Cllr Kim French

22nd April 2024

Appendix B

<u>Mayor's Charity Account 2023 / 2024</u>			
	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Net Profit</u>
	£	£	£
Balance brought forward			-
Afternoon Tea Ticket Sales - October 2023			1,197.00
Afternoon Tea Raffle and Donations			361.00
Afternoon Tea Catering (March Golf Club)		838.00	
Carol Service Collection			180.00
Mayors Ball Ticket Sales			5,960.00
Mayors Ball Donations and Raffle			1,114.50
Mayors Ball Catering, Venue, Decorations		4,974.50	
Civc Service Collection			150.00
Amount available for distribution			3,150.00
Donations to charities of Mayor's choice made in April/May 2024			
Fenland Sappers			500.00
1220 (March) Squadron Air Training Corps			1,500.00
St Georges Day School Writing Competition			350.00
March Summer Reading Challenge			200.00
St Marys Church			200.00
St Wendredas Church			200.00
St Peters Church			200.00
Total			3,150.00
Balance carried forward			-
.....			
S. Lemmon			
Town Clerk			
22.04.24			

Appendix C

ANNUAL REPORT of The Clerk to March Town Council (2023/2024)

INTRODUCTION

This Report and the main meeting (formerly “Annual Assembly”) on Monday 22 April 2024 mark the end of the 1st year in office of the current Council.
A warm welcome to you all.

Once again, it has been a very busy year for Councillors working hard for and on behalf of the Town and people of March.

2023 was the year of the world-famous wonky Christmas tree, that put March on the map and literally became a global sensation - with yours truly even appearing on national TV and radio!

Initially, its iconic tilt received a toxic response, but, in time, people came to love it. It became a tourist attraction and gave March a much-needed economic boost since the regeneration project had taken its toll on some local businesses.
I think the moral of our perfectly imperfect tree story is that none of us are perfect and we must accept and embrace that philosophy as we go through life.
My sincerest thanks to the Town Council and all the committee who work tirelessly to make the magic happen in March every Christmas.

The regeneration of Broad Street began in earnest in January 2023.
Pleasingly, those works are progressing well and should be complete by Autumn 2024.
The fountain will be welcomed back to Broad Street in its new location adjacent to Malletts Jewellers.

I am delighted that, as part of the project, Fenland District Council had budgeted for the replacement of the town’s redundant Christmas lighting and the next festive display promises to be excitingly interactive.

Wars continue to ravage across the world and we continue to respond to combined climate and cost of living crises.
The town has, in common with so much of the UK, battled with flooding, episodes that are increasing in severity and regularity.
Town Councillors have responded valiantly to the plight of those affected and, as a group, continue to fight hard to tackle local drainage/sewerage issues particularly as part of the planning process, striving to prevent a system that is already at capacity becoming completely overwhelmed once the town is developed in accordance with the Local Plan.

COUNCIL

During May 2023, Councillor Mark Purser was elected as Mayor of March and Councillor Gary Christy as his Deputy.

Cllr Purser retired from his role as Mayor in August on grounds of ill health and was succeeded by Councillor Kim French for the remainder of the mayoral year.

At the time of this Report the political groups within the Council are as follows; Conservative 8, Independent 1, Liberal Democrat 1 and Labour 2.

The average attendance of Councillors at Main Council Meetings was 89%, calculated as follows:

S Court	13 attendances out of 13	100%
J French	13 attendances out of 13	100%
K French	13 attendances out of 13	100%
G Christy	13 attendances out of 13	100%
M Field	13 attendances out of 13	100%
J Lawler	13 attendances out of 13	100%
H Orbell	12 attendances out of 13	92%
N Spencer	12 attendances out of 13	92%
M Purser	11 attendances out of 13	85%
T Taylor	11 attendances out of 13	85%
A Woollard	11 attendances out of 13	85%
S Harris	4 attendances out of 13	31%

The low attendance on the part of Cllr Harris has been to work commitments and kick-boxing competitions both nationally and internationally. However, Cllr Harris has, and remains, a committed councillor and dedicates a significant amount of time to council business as well as always responding to community needs.

ADMINISTRATION

March Town Council still maintains an office within the Town Hall which is staffed by one full-time and one part-time employees – the Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

The office is manned (as a minimum) from 8am to 3:30pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays and from 8.30am to midday on Fridays.

PLANNING

A total of 135 Planning Applications received consideration during the year, a decrease of 61 applications on the previous year's total.

Approval was recommended in respect of 102 applications, 18 were the subject of comments, more information was requested in respect of 1 application.

Objections/recommendation for refusal were raised in respect of 14 applications.

DONATIONS AND GRANTS

During 2023/2024 financial year donations totalling £1770.00 were made to the following organisations;

Fenland Farmers	£ 770.00
Fenland Wildlife	£ 500.00
March Library	£ 500.00

Grants totalling £5,000.00 were made as follows;

Volunteer Centre Fenland	£ 750.00
Isle of Ely Society for the Blind	£ 250.00
East Anglian Air Ambulance	£1,000.00
FACT	£ 500.00
MAFF (March Armed Forces Fayre)	£2,500.00

In addition, generous financial support was also given to March Museum Society and Estover Playing Field 2015 CIC.

ALLOTMENTS

Since relinquishing some of its allotment sites in October 2004, the remainder are now fully occupied and a waiting list of 49 exists at the time of writing.

An Allotments “Working Group” was established in November 2023 comprising Councillor Allotment Overseers, a forum created to share information, good practise and enhance the efficient running of the allotments.

There are ongoing issues with the registration of the council’s title (upgrade from possessory to absolute) to Grandford allotment with HMLR. Matters are in the hands of the Town Council’s solicitors.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

During the year March Town Council has supported the following organisations and events;

- A. March & District Museum.
- B. March Street Pride Group (previously March in Bloom).
- C. The town centre Christmas Lights. Christmas 2023 again saw an excellent display of lights thanks to the continuing efforts of all the volunteers and fundraising.
- D. March St. Georges Fayre and Christmas Market.
- E. Band Concerts on West End Park during July and August.

- F. March Town FC Estover CIC. It is pleasing to note that since signing the 99-year lease in November 2015, exceptional progress has been made with plans to develop the site into a first-class multi-sports facility. As previously advised, the lease has been assigned to March Town United Football Club and will continue to be operated for the benefit of the community.
- G. The March Armed Forces Fayre in September, the second of its kind, was once again an enormous success. This event will take place every 2 years going forward.
- H. The March Armed Forces Air Cadets – in November 2022, the first Mayor's Cadet was appointed. This has been a very successful and rewarding partnership.
- I. Remembrance Day service – there was no parade this year on account of the regeneration works in Broad Street. As such, the service was relocated to West End Park for a drum head service and the act of remembrance. The parade will return in November 2024.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, and continuing on a positive note, the past year has again been extremely successful with all Councillors, and the various political groups, working constructively together for the benefit of the town, in often challenging circumstances.

I wish you all the very best going forward.

Sarah Lemmon – Town Clerk

22 April 2024