

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **ANNUAL MEETING** of March Town Council held on 13 May 2024 in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	G Christy A Woollard	Town Mayor Deputy Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler M Purser T Taylor	M Field K French H Orbell N Spencer
	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk		S Lemmon S Taylor
	Public		38

24 Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

25 Outgoing Mayors Cadet Presentation

Following a Guard of Honour for the outgoing Mayor provided by the March Air Cadets, Cllr K French presented Corporal Faith Anders with a Mayor's Cadet badge and jewel by way of thanks for her 18 months' service to the Mayor during 2022 - 2024.

26 Declaration of Town Mayor 2024 / 2025

As agreed at the Main Council Meeting on 4 March 2024, Cllr G Christy had been nominated as Mayor of March and formally accepted the post. Cllr Christy expressed his honour and gratitude at having been elected and expressed his passion for the community and volunteering and his deep commitment to the residents of March.

27 Declaration of Mayor's Cadet 2024 / 2025

It was agreed that Sgt Lucy Thompson would serve as the Mayor's Cadet for the 2024 / 2025 term and Lucy was officially installed and presented with her badge by the new Mayor, Cllr Christy.

28 Declaration of Deputy Town Mayor 2024 / 2025

As agreed at the Main Council Meeting on 4 March 2024, Cllr A Woollard had been nominated as Deputy Mayor of March and formally accepted the post.

The Mayor's guests then retired for refreshments and the Mayor and Deputy Mayor both signed their respective declarations of office.

29 Agreement of Mayor's Allowance

Councillor Christy declared a prejudicial interest and left the room whilst the Mayor's allowance was discussed.

Councillor Woollard took the Chair for this agenda item only.

It was unanimously agreed that the following allowance would apply for 2024/2025:

£3,450.00p.

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

30 Dates of Council Meetings for 2024/2025

The dates for the 2024/2025 meetings were agreed (See Appendix 1). *The main meeting scheduled for 21 April 2025 would need to be moved to 28 April 2025.

31 Public Participation

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

32 Minutes of Meetings

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

Main Meeting - 22 April 2024

Christmas Lights – 29 April 2024

33 Matters Arising

Cllr Christy attended a Police Liaison meeting on 10 May. He highlighted the recent trend of scams on the elderly, with fraudsters visiting the vulnerable posing as landscape gardeners and other tradesmen.

34 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 declared a personal interest and took no part in the discussions relating to planning matters.

Councillor 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.*

Prior to any applications being discussed, Cllr Taylor advised that the drainage Commissioners had issued a statement confirming that all systems were at, or above, capacity.

F/YR23/0696/O

Barratt David Wilson Homes Cambs

Outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for access) for up to 425 dwellings (including affordable housing), formation of 2 x accesses, and a dropped kerb (for 38 Wimblington Road), safeguarded land for grass playing field, 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.

Received; 22 April 2024

Reply by: 6 May 2024

*Cllr K French declared an interest in this matter and did not take part in any discussions or vote.

Recommendation; Refusal – serious flooding and drainage concerns.

F/YR23/0942/F

Eastwood RVL March Ltd

Erect 5 industrial units (B2/B8 use), the formation of a car park and cycle park and associated landscaping at Land South of March Trading Estate, Westry Avenue, March.

Revised Proposals: amended site plan, unit floor plans and updated assessments.

Received: 26 April 2024

Reply by: 10 May 2024

Recommendation; Approval *subject to* satisfactory drainage/attenuation measures.

F/YR24/0232/O

Mrs Pauline Robertson, 115B West End, March

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

Revised Proposals: The application site has been reduced in size and the location of the proposed accesses have been amended.

Received: 22 April 2024

Reply by: 6 May 2024

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

F/YR24/0308/F

Inside Land Capital Ltd, Nottinghamshire
Erect 17 dwellings (15 x 2-storey 3-bed and 2 x 2-storey 2-bed) with associated access, parking, landscaping and surface water attenuation at Land North of 147-159 Wisbech Road, March.

Received: 22 April 2024

Reply by: 13 May 2024

Recommendation: Refusal. Concerns regarding flooding and drainage. Insufficient information provided re surface water run-off and attenuation.

F/YR24/0310/F

Mr Joe Maskell, 9 Harvester Close, March
Erect a 2-storey rear extension to existing dwelling at 10 Acacia Grove, March.

Received: 25 April 2024

Reply by: 16 May 2024

Recommendation: Approval

F./YR24/0323/F

Mr J Smith, 4 Meadowlands, March.
The siting of a mobile home (annexe) to existing dwelling (retrospective) at 4 Meadowlands, March.

Received: 26 April 2024

Reply by: 17 May 2024

Recommendation; Refusal - overdevelopment

F/YR24/0337/RM

Mr Paul Hussey, Millfield Developments, March.
Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission APP/D0515/W/22/3301398 relating to F/YR21/0819/FDL to erect 1 dwelling (single-storey, 2-bed) involving demolition of existing outbuildings and alterations to wall at access at Land South of Gillingham Lodge, The Chase, Gaul Road, March.

Received; 2 May 2024

Reply by: 23 May 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0356/F	<p>Liaise c/o Gillings Planning, Winchester. Change of use of dwelling (C3) to assisted living units (C2) including rendering and alterations to front window and installation of solar panels to roof (front) of existing dwelling and installation of detached garden room at 28A Upwell Road, March. Received: 7 May 2024 Reply by: 28 May 2024 Recommendation; Approval</p>
F/YR24/0362/F	<p>Ms C Hayes, 24 Hundred Road, March. Erect a single-storey side extension to existing dwelling at 34 Hundred Road, March. Received: 26 April 2024 Reply by: 17 May 2024 Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR24/0367/F	<p>Mr R Mair, Lindwood Farm, March. Erect a detached single-storey annex ancillary to existing dwelling at Linwood Farm, Linwood Lane, March. Received: 1 May 2024 Reply by: 22 May 2024 Recommendation; Approval</p>
F/YR24/0369/F	<p>Mr Nigel Goude, 15 Burn Street, March. Erect a 2-storey extension to rear of existing dwelling, involving the demolition of existing conservatory at 15 Burn Street, March. Received: 29 April 2024 Reply by: 20 May 2024 Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR24/0372/F	<p>Mr Sean Brown, 3 New Woods Drive, Wimblington. Erect 1 dwelling (single-storey, 3-bed) and the formation of an access at Land East of 80 Upwell Road, March. Received: 10 May 2024 Reply by: 31 May 2024 Recommendation: Approval <i>subject to satisfactory</i> attenuation measures being implemented.</p>
F/YR24/0373/F	<p>Jamie McGarvie, Ashewell Developments. Conversion of existing agricultural building (grain store) to 2 dwellings (2-storey, 4-bed) involving demolition of existing sheds at Land North of The Walnuts, Flaggrass Hill Road, March. Received: 9 May 2024</p>

Reply by; 30 May 2024

Recommendation; Approval *subject to satisfactory attenuation measures being implemented.*

F/YR24/0383/F

Mr Rugg, 70 Norwood Road, March

Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling at 70 Norwood Road, March.

Received; 10 May 2024

Reply by: 31 May 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0384/F

Mr P Crofts, 71 Knights End Road.

Erect a double garage to front of existing dwelling at 71 Knights End Road, March.

Received: 9 May 2024

Reply by: 30 May 2024

Recommendation; Refusal – development incongruous and damaging to the street scene.

F/YR24/0385/F

Dr A Chokshi, March Dental.

Erect a single-storey ground floor extension for use by existing dental surgery (Class E€ at 24 Broad Street, March.

Received: 10 May 2024

Reply by: 31 May 2024

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

Recommendation; Approval

35 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

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

Councillor Gary Christy 3 June 2024
Mayor of March.

Dates of March Town Council Meetings for 2024 / 2025
to be held in The Skoulding Suite at the Town Hall, March,
commencing at 7.15pm unless otherwise stated.

2024

3rd & 17th June

1st & 15th July

5th & 19th August

2nd & 16th September

7th & 21st October

4th & 18th November

2nd & 16th December

2025

6th & 20th January

3rd & 17th February

3rd & 17th March

7th April

28th April *

Main Meeting (formerly "Annual
Assembly")

12th 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 **25th** November 2024 at 7.30pm at March Museum.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 3 June 2024 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

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

36 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Spencer and Orbell and County Councillor John Gowing.

37 Police Update

Cllr Christy attended a meeting on 10 May 2024. Minutes to be circulated once received by the Clerk. Next meeting scheduled for 10 June 2024 (tbc).

38 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 2 additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR23/0909/RM

Paul Hussey, Millfield Development, March.
Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission F/YR21/1105/O to erect 4 dwellings (1 single-storey 3-bed and 3 2-storey 4-bed) at Land South and West of Highfield House, Elm Road, March.
Received: 14 May 2024
Reply by: 28 May 2024
Recommendation; Approval subject to Town Council's flooding/drainage concerns in this area being fully addressed and attenuated.

F/YR24/0396/O

Richborough Estates
Erect up to 230 dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at Land North of Cherryholt Farm, Burrowmoor Road, March.
Received: 24 May 2024
Reply by: 14 June 2024
Recommendation; Approval in principle. The Town Council has serious concerns about flooding and drainage at the location. Any approval must be subject to highways recommendations and suitable s106 contributions/provision secured.

F/YR24/0424/F

Mr Sean Saxby, MJS Investments (March) Ltd.
Change of use of land [from agriculture] to dog exercise area, installation of secure fencing up to 1.8m high (max), erect shelters and formation of new access and car parking at Land East of Mill Hill Roundabout, Wimblington Road, March.
Received: 29 May 2024
Reply by: 19 June 2024
Recommendation: Approval, subject to satisfactory noise abatement measures for the benefit of neighbouring dwellings (as opening hours are very long!) and Highways recommendations. The Town Council has concerns that the current access' proximity to the roundabout will cause backing up on the roundabout.

F/YR24/0435/F

Mr Josh Ingram, 4 Burn Street, March.
Erect a 2-storey side extension and single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling at 4 Burn Street, March.
Received; 29 May 2024
Reply by: 19 May 2024
Recommendation; Approval

39 Public Participation

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

40 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 13 May 2024

41 Matters Arising

None

42 Resolution to Approve the Accounting Statements for 2023 / 2024

The Annual Accounting Statements for the financial year 2023 / 2024, as previously circulated, were re-presented to the meeting by the Responsible Financial Officer. Having been previously approved by all councillors at the main meeting of 22 April 2024, a few minor adjustments had been made at the behest of the Council's Internal Auditors which affected Boxes 3 and 9 of the Accounting Statement. It was therefore necessary to seek formal approval once again and re-sign and date the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

After discussing the adjustments;

- a) It was proposed by Councillor K French and seconded by Councillor Purser, 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 Gary Christy duly signed and dated such document as necessary.

43 Summer Band Concerts

The draw was taken prior to the meeting and all dates were allocated to councillors and packs distributed.

44 Grants & Donations

No applications had been received.

45 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

As a result of the General Election, Cllr J French reported that all council meetings had been cancelled.

Detailed costings were awaited in relation to possible projects identified as a result of the Broad Street and MATS underspend.

Cllr J French advised that a community celebration party and ribbon-cutting was being organised to celebrate the completion of the Broad Street regeneration at the end of October.

46 Fenland District Council Update

Cllr French advised that all meetings had been cancelled further to the Election being called in July.

47 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:30pm.

Councillor G Christy1 July 2024
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

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

Present	Councillor	G Christy A Woollard	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler M Purser	M Field K French H Orbell N Spencer
	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk		S Lemmon S Taylor
	Public		1

49 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Harris and Taylor and County Councillor Gowing.

50 Police Update

Minutes of the 10 May 2024 meeting were circulated by the Clerk on 5 June. The meeting scheduled for 10 June 2024 was cancelled owing to the General Election. The next meeting will be held on 11 July.

51 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 2 (two) additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR24/0115/FDC

Fenland District Council

Erect a single-storey toilet block at Land South West of 2 Broad Street, March.

Revised Proposals; Amended plans received comprising amended site layout, elevations, floor and roof plan and design and access statement.

Received: 17 June 2024

Reply by: 1 July 2024

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR24/0496/F

Mr & Mrs White, 79 Burrowmoor Road, March.

Erect a 2-storey, part single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling at 79 Burrowmoor Road, March.

Received: 17 June 2024

Reply by: 8 July 2024

Recommendation: Refusal – concerns over over-looking the neighbouring property.

F/YR24/0499/VOC

Mr Tony Valentine, Snowmountain Investments Ltd, The Oliver Cromwell Hotel.

Variation of condition 12 (list of approved plans) relating to planning approval F/YR22/0478/F (erect 6 residential units (1 x 3-storey block of flats – 6 x 2-bed) with associated parking) to enable changes to external appearance of windows and doors at Land South of 88-90 High Street, March.

Received: 17 June 2024

Reply by: 8 July 2024

*Cllr Lawler declared an interest in this application and took no part in discussions or voting.

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR24/0501/F

Mrs Kathy Francis, 3A Hereward Street, March.

Conversion of existing detached garage to living accommodation ancillary to existing dwelling, involving the replacement of existing flat roof with dual pitched roof (part retrospective) at 3A Hereward Street, March.

Received: 18 June 2024

Reply by: 9 July 2024

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR24/0505/F

Euro Property Investment Limited, Birmingham

Erect 23 units (Use Class B2, B8 and E(g) (i), (ii) and (iii)), 6 x cycle shelters, 6 x bin stores and 11 x 6m high lighting columns, including associated landscaping and parking at Land North of 7 Martin Avenue, March.

Received: 20 June 2024

Reply by: 11 July 2024

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

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR24/0509/RM

Allison Homes East, Peterborough.

Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission APP/D0515/W/23/3327578, relating to application F/YR22/0062/O to erect 110 dwellings (3 x 1-bed flats, 3 x 2-bed flats, 32 x 2-storey, 2-bed, 4 x 3-storey, 3-bed, 55 x 2-storey, 3-bed and 13 x 2-storey, 4-bed) at Land South of 73-81 Upwell Road, March.

Received: 24 June 2024

Reply by: 15 July 2024

*Cllrs Court and Purser declared an interest in this matter and did not take part in discussions or voting.

Recommendation: Refusal – the developer has not submitted documents/information required by the Planning Inspectorate.

F/YR24/0510/F

Mr & Mrs Emmington, 11 Steeple View, March.

Change of use of existing dwelling to mixed use to include erection of a single-storey detached building for the use as a nail/beauty salon business (retrospective) at 11 Steeple View, March.

Received: 24 June 2024

Reply by: 15 July 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0512/F

Mr Kevin Kidman, 52 Wulpstan Way, Cambridge.

Erect a dwelling (2-storey, 2-bed) (part retrospective) at 46 Newlands Avenue, March.

Received: 21 June 2024

Reply by: 12 July 2024

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR24/0514/F

Mr Rick Hughes, 1 Meadowlands, March.

Erect 1 dwelling (self-build) and Land South of 1 Meadowlands, March.

Received: 25 June 2024

Reply by: 16 July 2024

Recommendation; Refusal – over-development

F/YR24/0435/F

Mr Josh Ingram, 4 Burn Street, March.

Erect a 2-storey side extension and single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling at 4 Burn Street, March.

Revised Proposals; amended roof design and materials.

Received: 27 June 2024

Reply by: 11 July 2024

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR24/0526/F

Mr Cherry, Prestige Pipelaying JV Ltd, Unit 5, 55 Thorny Avenue.

Erect 1 x industrial unit (B2 use) at Plot 5, Norwood Industrial Estate, Norwood Road, March.

Received: 27 June 2024

Reply by: 18 July 2024

Recommendation: Approval subject to the usual conditions re operating in a residential area.

52 Public Participation

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

52 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 3 June 2024

Planning Meeting – 17 June 2024

Christmas Lights – 17 June 2024

53 Matters Arising

None.

54 Freedom of the Town Presentation

At the meeting of March Town Council on 18 April 2024 Cllr K French nominated Cllr J French to receive the prestigious award of *Honorary Freedom of the Town of March*. 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.

Cllr J French was presented with a framed scroll by Cllr Christy. Cllr J French expressed her gratitude at receiving this award and felt very honoured to be only the fifth recipient of the Freedom of the Town, and thanked everyone for their support.

55 Council Representation to Outside Body – March Educational Foundation

On 4 March, it was determined that consideration be given at a future meeting to the appointment of a further member to the March Educational Fund Committee.

Cllrs Orbell and Field are already on the committee in a non-councillor capacity. It was proposed by Cllr K French and seconded by Cllr J French that Cllr Woollard be appointed to the Committee to represent March Town Council. The Clerk would contact Reg Gill to advise.

56 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

County Councillor J Gowing had sent an update in his absence regarding the appointment of a new Fire Chief. Any decision regarding closure of the Manea fire station would be deferred until after the election.

Cllr J French provided an update on MATS and the Combined Authority funding for Peas Hill, Hobbs Lot and St Peters Road, projects which would be delivered after the completion of Broad Street.

57 Fenland District Council Update

Cllr J French confirmed that Broad Street would be completed on time and advised that there was a sizable underspend which would be used to improve other parts of the town.

FDC grants would be available for empty shops and for improving shop frontages. Grants up to £15,000 could be applied for, with the business owner only required to pay only 5% of the amount applied for. It was hoped that this would greatly improve the aesthetic of the town.

58 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:20 pm.

Councillor G Christy5 August 2024
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

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

Present	Councillor	G Christy A Woollard	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court K French M Purser T Taylor	J French H Orbell N Spencer
	County Councillor		J Gowing
	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk		S Lemmon S Taylor
	Public		1

61 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Field, Harris and Lawler.

62 Estover CIC - Presentation and Update

Councillors discussed the history of Estover playing field (March Town FC Estover CIC) and its progress in relation to securing a 3G pitch, a much-needed first class sporting facility for the town of March.

March Town Council had generously budgeted £80k pa since 2019 to principally support repayment of the CIC's loan to Cambridgeshire County Council (for the pavilion build costs). The Football Association will be making a significant contribution towards the cost of the 3G pitch and the CIC is involved in various fund-raising projects and activities to raise the £300k it needs for matched funding.

Cllr J French proposed that March Town Council commits a further £80k per year for the next three years in order to facilitate the delivery of the 3G pitch at Estover.

This was seconded by Cllr Purser.

Councillors unanimously support the proposal.

The Clerk will draft an agreement providing that all monies shall be returned to MTC in the event that works on the 3G pitch have not commenced by July 2027.

63 Police Update

Presentation/Minutes of the 11 July 2024 meeting were circulated by the Clerk on 5 August 2024.

64 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.

*Cllr Purser declared a personal interest in the evening's applications to enable his involvement in a future Planning meeting at Fenland District Council and therefore took no part in any discussions.

<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 2 (two) additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR23/1070/RM	Mr David Feary, Henley-on-Thames Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission F/YR20/1138/O to erect 4 x dwellings (single-storey, 4-bed) at Land South of 85-89 Upwell Road, March.
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Revised Proposals; additional information received – Response letter to Lead Local Flood Authority comments- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy Rev B – June 2024.

Received: 16 July 2024

Reply by: 30 July

Recommendation; Approval only on the basis that the LLFA's objections can be overcome (hydraulic conditions and pond design)

F/YR24/0292/F	One Wisbech Road March Ltd, London. Erect a Drive-thru Café, automated carwash and substation with associated parking spaces and 6 x EV charging points at Land North of 205 Wisbech Road, March.
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Revised Proposals; Receipt of Noise Impact Assessment Report, Lighting Assessment, Residential Receptor Location Plan, Assessed Scheme of Lighting.

Received: 16 July 2024

Reply by: 30 July 2024

Recommendation; Refusal. Original concerns regarding drainage and flooding have not been addressed/discharged.

F/YR24/0424/F

Mr Sean Saxby, MJS Investments (March) Ltd.
Change of use of land to dog exercise area, installation of secure fencing up to 1.8m high (max), erect shelters and formation of new access and car parking at Land East of Mill Hill Roundabout, Wimblington Road, March.

Revised Proposals: Site plan, access and parking plans, supporting transport technical note along with detailed access plan from transport consultant, design and access statement, Flood Risk Assessment and outline sustainable drainage strategy from drainage consultant and lighting specification detail.

Received: 30 July 2024

Reply by: 12 August 2024

Recommendation; Approval *subject to* satisfactory highways/access arrangements in line with the Highways Authority's requirements and recommendations. The junction/site access remains dangerously close to the roundabout on a 60mph stretch of road.

F/YR24/0568/F

Mr Lee Emmington, 61 Cavalry Drive, March.
Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling involving the demolition of existing conservatory at 61 Cavalry Drive, March.

Received: 15 July 2024

Reply by: 5 August 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0581/F

Mr Kallum Vincent, 3 Collingwood Avenue, March.
Erect a single-storey side and rear extension to existing dwelling involving the demolition of existing conservatory and rear extension at 3 Collingwood Avenue, March.

Received: 25 July 2024

Reply by: 15 August 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0587/RM

Mr Nick Bell, 19 Silver Street, March
Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission F/YR22/1268/O to erect 2 dwellings (3-storey, 3-bed) involving demolition of existing garage at Land East of 19 Silver Street, March.

Received: 26 July 2024

Reply by: 16 August 2024

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR24/0597/F

Mrs K Wingfield, 22 Maple Grove, March
Change of use of existing dwelling to mixed use to include
erection of a single-storey detached building for use as a
nail/hair/beauty salon business (part retrospective) at 22 Maple
Grove, March.

Received: 1 August 2024

Reply by: 22 August 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0623/F

Mr R Dempsey, 122 Duncombes Road, March.
Erect a single-storey side extension to form a pool house at
Willow House, 122 Duncombes Road, March.

Received: 2 August 2024

Reply by: 23 August 2024

Recommendation; Approval

65 Public Participation

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

66 New Model Financial Regulations 2024

New Model Financial Regulations have been published this year and were circulated to Councillors by the Clerk on 17 July 2024.

The Clerk explained the main changes, principally the requirement to maintain an enhanced asset register.

Cllr K French proposed that the Regulations approved and duly adopted by March Town Council. This was seconded by Cllr Spencer.

67 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 1 July 2024

Planning Meeting – 15 July 2024

Christmas Lights – 15 July 2024

68 Matters Arising

None

69 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Cllr J French discussed her recent attendance at a Highways and Transport meeting and discussed the unrealistic conditions for CPE.

County Councillor Gowing confirmed that the decision whether to close Manea Fire Station would be deferred another year! He is leading the member-led review and discussed recruitment and retention and a pilot scheme at March station.
Cllr Gowing urged councillors to complete the Police and Crime Commissioner online survey if they have not done so already.

70 Fenland District Council Update

The 95% grant funding discussed last month had increased from £15,000 - £50,000, which is fantastic news for local shops and business.

The works in Broad Street remain on schedule and there are discussions ongoing via Cllr Spencer with the Royal School of Military Engineering regarding commissioning the missing middle section of the Fountain, potentially as part of an apprenticeship project.

71 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

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

Councillor G Christy2 September 2024
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 2 September 2024 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	G Christy A Woollard	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French H Orbell N Spencer	M Field J Lawler M Purser
	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk		S Lemmon S Taylor
	Press		1

74 Apologies

Apologies were received from K French, T Taylor and County Councillor J Gowing.

75 Police Update

Presentation/Minutes of the 11 July 2024 meeting were circulated by the Clerk on 5 August 2024. The next meeting will be held on 12 September 2024. Councillors requested that G Christy reinforce concerns about continued issues with parking, speeding and young motorcyclists riding erratically and without helmets.

76 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 additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

- F/YR24/0662/F Colin Roberts, Flower Garden Group Ltd, Harlow.
Erect 9 x single-storey dwellings (3 x 1-bed and 6 x 2-bed) at Site of Former Gas Distribution Centre, Gas Road, March.
Received: 20 August 2024
Reply by: 10 September 2024
*M Purser declared an interest in this item and took no part in discussions or voting thereon.
Recommendation: Approval.
- F/YR24/0670/F Sally Batchelor, 6 Aspenwood Grove, March.
Change of use of existing business units from use classes E(g), B2 and B8 to class uses E and F (retrospective) at 7-8 Platinum Business Park, 59 Thorby Avenue, March.
Received: 27 August 2024
Reply by: 17 September 2024
Recommendation: Approval
- F/YR24/0682/F Mr & Mrs Goodwin, 14 Berryfield, March
Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling and conversion of garage to create additional living accommodation involving the insertion of a bay window to front elevation at 14 Berryfield, March.
Received: 27 August 2024
Reply by: 17 September 2024
Recommendation: Approval
- F/YR24/0683/VOC Mrs T McCurry, Ravens Haven, March
Removal of condition 2 of Planning Permission F/YR10/0380/F (erection of a 3-bed detached agricultural dwelling with detached carport/garage) relating to the removal of an agricultural occupancy at Ravens Haven, Grange Road, March.
Received: 29 August 2024
Reply by: 19 September 2024
Recommendation; Approval
- F/YR24/0687/F Mr & Mrs John Cannon, 7 Sation Road, Coldham.
Erect a single-storey extension to rear and porch to front involving demolition of existing rear extension, and installation of external insulation and render to existing dwelling at The House, St Johns Chase, March.
Received: 29 August 2024
Reply by: 19 September 2024
Recommendation; Approval

77 Public Participation

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

78 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 5 August 2024

Planning Meeting – 19 August 2024

Christmas Lights – 19 August 2024

79 Matters Arising

5 August 2024 Main Meeting. Minute 62; The Clerk had drafted an agreement to be signed by March Town FC Estover CIC. This was duly signed at a meeting of the CIC on 22 August and the Clerk had received the Town Council's signed copy of the agreement for safe-keeping. The Clerk had been advised that the CIC are incredibly grateful to the Town Council for its generous support and a formal letter of thanks was received from the Estover Committee by the Clerk on 28 August 2024 which the Clerk will circulate electronically to councillors following the meeting.

80 Grants and Donations

Two applications for grants were received this quarter;

The Clerk advised members that no awards had been made so far in this financial year and the available sum budgeted for grants/donations was therefore £2,500.00

G Christy declared an interest in both applications before members and left the room for the duration of this item.

- i) FACT: The sum of £195 was requested to provide transport to residents to attend the "Christmas Cracker" event hosted by FACT.
Application unanimously **approved** by councillors.
- ii) Friends of March Railway Station: The sum of £329.92 was requested to purchase gardening tools.
*J Lawler, as an adopter, declared an interest in this item and left the room whilst this application was discussed.
Application unanimously **approved** by councillors.

81 Biodiversity Policy

Town and Parish Councils are under a duty pursuant to Section 40 of NERC 2006 as amended by section 102 of the Environment Act 2021 to consider what action to take in relation to biodiversity, but with no duty to publish a report. A model diversity policy has been produced with has been reviewed favourably by DEFRA and published by both NALC and SLCC.

The Clerk reviewed the model policy to make it suitable for March Town Council and circulated the draft to councillors on 13 August 2024 for consideration and approval in advance of the meeting.

It was proposed by N Spencer and seconded by M Field to adopt the policy, and this was approved by all members.

H Orbell enquired how we could enforce/monitor the restriction of the use of pesticides on allotments. The Assistant Clerk would include a statement about the new Biodiversity Policy in a letter to allotment holders and this would be further supported and encouraged by the Allotment Overseers.

On a more general note, it was mooted and considered appropriate going forward to ask successful applicants to be accountable for monies paid to them by MTC. The Clerk and G Christy would devise a suitable evaluation form to demonstrate that monies had been spent for the purposes applied for, possibly with a suitable clawback clause.

82 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Cllr J French had attended a very positive meeting with County Highways and Transport and Cllr Count regarding the walking, cycling and mobility feasibility study - which MTC would be consulted on in due course. J French declared this a fantastic scheme. Once costings were finalised, an application would be made to the Combined Authority for funding.

Cllr J French further reported that the delivery of the new SEN school on Kingswood Road had been delayed by the government from 2026-2027.

J Gowing had advised by email that a damaged deck on the Marylebone/West End footbridge had been reported to him by members of the public, but remedial work had been undertaken.

83 Fenland District Council Update

Cllr J French reported that the deadline for expressions of interest for the shopfront grant scheme closed on Friday 30 August. There had been some 30-40 applications submitted. Some had expressed concern that it was unfair on businesses to match-fund the 5% rather than the property landlord, but this was, ultimately, for private negotiation between tenants and landlords.

J French updated on the planning application for West End Park and further mentioned that certain applications for relatively big developments (one for 88 dwellings on Wimblington Road) and/or ones that MTC had recommended refusal (for example the car wash and coffee drive through near KFC) had been approved under *delegated* authority (ie by officers and not the planning committee). The Clerk would follow this up with FDC.

84 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

The Clerk advised members that there were two outstanding/unpaid invoices from Nurture who cut the grass on our behalf. They have continually failed to cut some of the contracted area along Westry and the Clerk had refused to pay the invoices until the works were completed to our satisfaction. As such, the Clerk asked that, if the works were completed

sufficiently before the next main meeting, could she go ahead and settled the invoices which were, be definition, well overdue? Members agreed that this would be acceptable. The invoices would, of course, still show on the October Payments List.

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

Councillor G Christy7 October 2024
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 7 October 2024 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	G Christy	Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court	M Field
		J Lawler	H Orbell
		M Purser	N Spencer
	Cambridgeshire County Councillor	J Gowing	
	Town Clerk	S Lemmon	
	Assistant Town Clerk	S Taylor	
	Press	1	

86 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs K French, J French, S Harris and A Woollard.

87 Police Update

Presentation/Minutes of the 12 September 2024 meeting were circulated by the Clerk on 17 September 2024.

88 Planning Applications

<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 applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR24/0725/A	Tesco Stores plc, Hostmoor Avenue. Display of 5 x non-illuminated window vinyl and 3 x pole-mounted promotional banner signs at Tesco Stores plc, 10 Hostmoor Avenue, March. Received: 16 September 2024 Reply by: 7 October 2024 Recommendation; Approval
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F/YR24/0727/F	<p>Mrs R Wright, 81 Elwyn Road, March</p> <p>Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling, involving demolition of existing dwelling at 81 Elwyn Road, March.</p> <p>Received: 16 September 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 7 October 2024</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval</p>
F/YR24/0739/FDC	<p>Fenland District Council</p> <p>Construction of a BMX pump track within existing public park on FDC-owned land north of Riverbank Close, March.</p> <p>Received: 17 September 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 8 October 2024</p> <p>*Cllr Purser declared an interest in this item and did not participate or vote on this application.</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval</p>
F/YR24/0755/TRCA	<p>Mr M Carter, 38 West End, March.</p> <p>Works to 1 x Elder Tree within a conservation area at 38 West End, March.</p> <p>Received: 20 September 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 11 October 2024</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval</p>
F/YR24/0768/F	<p>Mr Nicholas Underwood, 6 Upton Close, Peterborough.</p> <p>Erect 1 x self-build/custom dwelling (2-storey, 3-bed) with a 2.0m high boundary fence involving the demolition of existing garages at River Drive, March.</p> <p>Received: 30 September 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 21 October 2024</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval</p>
F/YR24/0774/TRTPO	<p>Mrs Lindsay Murphy-Brown</p> <p>Fell 1 x Cypress Tree and 1 x Birch Tree covered by TPO 07/1985 at 45 Westwood Avenue, March.</p> <p>Received: 30 September 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 21 October 2024</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval, subject to receipt of a further report/evidence justifying removal of the cedar tree.</p>
F/YR24/0788/TRCA	<p>Dawn Rees, 27 West End, March.</p> <p>Works to 1 x Acacia Tree and 1 x Sycamore within a Conservation Area at 27 West End, March.</p> <p>Received: 1 October 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 22 October 2024</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval</p>

F/YR24/0662/F	<p>Erect 9 single-storey dwellings (3 x 1-bed and 6 x 2-bed) at Site of Former Gas Distribution Centre, Gas Road, March.</p> <p>Revised Proposals: revised site plan to address highways comments.</p> <p>Received: 4 October 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 18 October 2024</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval</p>
F/YR24/0790/VOC	<p>Mr R Smith & Mr M Groves, Coleseed Business Complex</p> <p>Details reserved by Condition 05 (list of approved plans) of planning permission F/YR23/0083/F (Erect Industrial Building involving demolition of existing buildings) – relating to roof line at Coleseed Business Complex, Upwell Road, March.</p> <p>Received: 2 October 2024</p> <p>Reply by: 23 October 2024</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval</p>

89 Public Participation

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

90 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 2 September 2024
 Planning Meeting – 16 September 2024
 Christmas Lights – 16 September 2024

91 Matters Arising

None.

92 Grants and Donations

Applications for Grants and Donations are discussed quarterly and were discussed at the main meeting of March Town Council on 2 September 2024.

The March Lions had submitted an application within time, which, due to technical issues, had not been received by the Clerk. The application and supporting documents had gone into an infected items mail box.

As a gesture of good will, March Town Council has, most unusually, and *not to set a future precedent*, agreed to consider the application soonest, rather than to wait until December, so as not to prejudice the applicant.

Applicant; March Lions
 Amount Requested; £500
 Reason for Expenditure; Repair/Restore Santa's Sleigh

Cllrs Christy and Purser declared interests in this application and left the room for the duration of the discussion.

Councillors all voted in favour of awarding the March Lions for the sum requested (£500).

93 MVAS/DTSA (Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs/Delivering Transport Strategy Aims)

Cllr J French was unwell and was not able to attend tonight's meeting. This was the first Town Council meeting she had missed in over 30 years.

In her absence, the Clerk shared an update from Cllr J French.

Cllr J French had obtained information and quotes from CCC for new MVAS's (both battery and solar-powered).

The solar-enabled units require wide-based posts to be installed to accommodate the extra weight of those units (posts at additional cost).

Whilst possible to secure via the LHI scheme, we would have to wait until 2026 for delivery. It would therefore be more expeditious to purchase new units outright and take delivery in early 2025 when CCC place orders for the rest of the County. Cllr French had recommended that 3 units be purchased by the Town Council.

The MVAS signs are essential tools used to gather the information needed to make successful LHI applications.

Without data being downloaded and submitted to CCC/police on a monthly basis, we cannot provide the evidence required in support of future LHI applications.

Data has not been uploaded in over a year and monthly reports need to once again be submitted, Cllr J French had urged.

Cllrs Orbell and Field advised that they would change the battery on the MVAS on Knights End Road.

Cllr J French had requested that the unit and accessories be returned to her soonest so that she could gather information needed to investigate recent complaints and to support future LHI's.

The Clerk has to complete an expression of interest form* for LHI's for 2025/2026.

Councillors have been emailed twice about this and the Clerk reminded all present to submit their thoughts to her this week to meet the 11 October deadline*.

Cllr J French had suggested a speed reduction (to 40 mph) on Elm Road through to Chain Bridge, with double yellow-lines suggested for Creek Road, St Johns Road and Wigstones Road due to issues with bad parking.

Complaints had been received from residents in Gaul Road, Burrowmoor Road, Knights End Road and Westwood Avenue also (all relating to speeding).

Councillors discussed the issue of speeding, MVAS and LHI's and decided to defer making a final decision until the November meeting when Cllr J French would be in attendance.

94 VE Day 80 – 8 May 2025

Cllr Spencer along with some of the MAFF team will be organising a beacon lighting for VE Day on 8 May 2025 which will be an event similar to that held on 6 June 2024 to mark 80 years since DD day and the beginning of the liberation of Western Europe.

The Town Council is delighted to support this important celebration/commemoration.

95 Burial Grounds/Cemetery

The Clerk advised that she had been contacted by the Diocese of Ely in relation to the closed churchyard at St Wendredas Church. Local residents had recently made complaints about over-hanging trees. The Diocese was trying to establish who was the Burial Authority for the area and therefore who had responsibility for getting the trees cut back.

The churchyard was closed by Order in 1855.

By virtue of the Burial Act of 1855 and The Local Government Act of 1894, responsibility for the maintenance of a closed churchyard passed automatically to Parish Councils (essentially all duties and responsibilities hitherto that of the Church Wardens).

There has never been any involvement with or maintenance of the churchyard by March Town Council since it was created in 1974 and a lot of town and parish councils have been recently shocked to discover that they were responsible for closed churchyards in their area, for which they had little or no budget.

The Clerk had been in communication with Fenland District Council who had indicated that we could possibly find a way forward on this jointly. The Clerk would follow this up this week.

There would be budgetary implications of course, although it would be difficult to quantify the exposure with any degree of certainty. The Clerk would be preparing the draft budget in readiness for the November meeting and would need to make provision for the churchyard maintenance.

The Clerk would also need to consider additional insurance and would make the necessary enquiries with Zurich.

96 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Cllr J French's update regarding LHI had been shared via the Clerk and mostly covered under minute number 93 (above).

There had been a meeting of the Highways and Transport Committee last week and the results of the 2024/2025 LHI's had been determined. Norwood Avenue was approved as a complex scheme.

CCC are running a 20mph scheme across the county. Cllr J French recommended that March Town Council considers implementing the scheme when funds became available. More information to follow.

County Councillor J Gowing discussed recruitment and retention in relation to Manea Fire Station. A report was expected to be issue in February and the station was continuing to operate in the meantime.

97 Fenland District Council Update

Broad Street is nearing completion. The Fountain is set to be re-installed in Broad Street w/c 21 October 2024.

There are over 100 stalls already booked for the Christmas Market on 1 December 2024. Funding had been secured for replacement stall covers and a new gazebo for Father Christmas.

98 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

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

Councillor G Christy4 November 2024
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

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

Present	Councillor	G Christy A Woollard	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French H Orbell N Spencer	M Field J Lawler M Purser T Taylor
	Cambridgeshire County Councillor	J Gowing	
	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk	S Lemmon S Taylor	
	Public	0	
	Press	1	

101 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr K French and S Harris.

102 Police Update

Presentation/Minutes of the 15 October 2024 meeting were circulated by the Clerk on 21 October 2024. The next meeting will take place on 6 November 2024.

103 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 one additional planning application would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR24/0447/RM

Mrs Emily Green, 6 Knights End Road, March.

Reserved Matters applications relating to detailed matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission F/YR21/0164/O to erect 1 dwelling (single-storey, 2-bed) involving the demolition of existing outbuildings (part-retrospective) at Land North of 6 Knights End Road, March.

Revised Proposals; revised site layout and dwelling arrangements proposed in response to officer concerns.

Received: 29 October 2024

Reply by: 12 November 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0118/F

Silverwood Property Holdings

Change of use of existing building to 6 x 1-bed flats, including first floor extensions, rear dormer and landscaped courtyard at 140 and 144 Station Road, March.

Revised Proposals; Amended description of development and further Bat and Bird Survey.

Received: 22 October 2024

Reply by: 5 November 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0837/VOC

Mrs S Watson, Bedford.

Variation of conditions 2 (materials) and 4 (list of approved drawings) of Planning Permission F/YR23/0150/F (part demolition and rebuilding of existing dwelling (part retrospective)) to extend dwelling, render all external elevations and create vehicle access at 42 Hundred Road, March.

Received: 22 October 2024

Reply by: 12 November 2024

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR24/0845/FDC

Fenland District Council

Erect 1 x dwelling (single storey, 2-bed) at Land North of 84 Upwell Road, Access from Smiths Drive, March.

(Reg 3 application – FDC as applicant)

Received: 23 October 2024

Reply by: 13 November 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0854/LB

Fenland District Council

External works to the listed monument including replacing existing stepped base with sandstone steps at War Memorial Broad Street March

Received; 29 October 2024

Reply by: 19 November 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0856/F

Mr & Mrs Davies, Fenland Wind and Air Sports, Cross Road, March.

Change of use of land to a campsite for the siting of 5 touring caravans, 3 Glamping Pods, 2 Shepherds Huts, 1 container (outdoor kitchen) and retention of 1 container (training/storage), erection of a toilet block involving demolition of existing toilet block and formation of a gravel driveway at March Airfield, Cross Road, March.

Received: 29 October 2024

Reply by: 19 November 2024

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR24/0858/F

Mr Fauk Solak, 18 Broad Street, March

Change of use of bank to restaurant, and external alterations including remove signage, lengthen front windows and erect a rear timber canopy (part retrospective) at 18 Broad Street, March.

Received: 1 November 2024

Reply by: 22 November 2024

Recommendation; Approval *subject to Conservation Officer's comments.*

104 Public Participation

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

105 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 7 October 2024

Planning Meeting – 21 October 2024

Christmas Lights – 21 October 2024

106 Matters Arising

None

107 MVAS/DTSA (Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs/Delivering Transport Strategy Aims)

Cllr Christy confirmed that all data (0.5m data points) had now been downloaded. He would speak to the police at the Liaison meeting on Wednesday to confirm where the data was to be sent.

Data collected showed that speeding in March was well below the national average, but there were definitely some issues/hotspots to tackle.

Clerk instructed to order 2 new batteries for the existing unit.

Cllrs Spencer and Taylor concerned that nothing is being done with the data. Spending time and council money on more units is not cost-effective if the police do nothing to enforce speeding.

Deterrent effects of speed monitoring and Speedwatch were discussed.

Cllr Orbell thanks Cllr Christy for assisting with MVAS; 3 people are definitely needed to lift/move the unit.

108 LHI's (Local Highways Improvements)

Cllr J French had provided the Clerk with a list of areas that would benefit from double-yellow lines (a non-complex scheme) due to issues with poor/dangerous parking.

The window for applications for the 2025/2026 round of LIS closes on Friday 10 January 2025.

The Clerk asked Councillors to have regard to the email she had recently circulated and the information/evidence that is needed to effectively support an application, particularly consultation, local support, anecdotal evidence, evidence of incidents, photos/videos etcetera. The evidence-gathering process should begin now and the Clerk requested that evidence be submitted to her before Christmas so that she can apply well before the January deadline.

Cllr J French discussed the possibility of purchasing new MVAS signs via the LHI scheme, although this would mean we would not acquire the units for some time.

MVAS data was considered vital evidence to support LHI applications.

CCC Highways officer had asked to meet Cllr J French and the Clerk re the recently approved Norwood Avenue traffic-calming scheme.

109 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Broad Street would be finished in 1-2 weeks. The gasworks outside Wetherspoons are currently causing significant disruption/tail-backs in town, but the gas board is doing the work piecemeal, rather than replace the damaged length of pipe in its entirety.

CCC will shortly commence works to strengthen the town bridge.

The Northern Link Road is currently being costed.

New flagpoles have been installed in Broad Street.

County Cllr Gowing advised that the Marylebone Bridge would be closed again in the New Year for repair.

110 Fenland District Council Update

FDC are still having 2 planning meetings per month to deal with the backlog of planning applications.

111 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

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

Councillor G Christy2 December 2024
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 2 December 2024 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	G Christy	Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French S Harris M Purser T Taylor	M Field K French J Lawler N Spencer
	Cambridgeshire County Councillor	J Gowing	
	Town Clerk	S Lemmon	
	Assistant Town Clerk	S Taylor	
	Public	1	
	Press	1	

114 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Woollard, Orbell and Harris.

115 Police Update

Presentation/Minutes of the 6 November 2024 meeting had not been received/circulated by the Clerk. The December meeting is being held this evening so there will be no MTC representation, but minutes will be circulated in due course.

116 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 one additional planning application would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR23/0550/F

Fink Developments.

Erect 18 dwellings (12 x 2-storey, 4-bed and 6 2-storey, 3-bed) with associated infrastructure and the formation of 2 balancing ponds and public open space at Phase B Land East of Berryfield, March.

Revised Proposals: Updated views of the Town Council are sought following most recent response of 20 February 2024 and LLFA response and others made since that date.

Received: 26 November 2024

Reply by: 3 December 2024

Recommendation; Refusal. The Town Council stands by its recommendation of 19.2.24 to refuse this application due to flooding and draining issues at the location.

F/YR24/0917/F

Mrs Steph Dickson, 46A The Causeway

Erect detached single storey ancillary building to front of existing dwelling (retrospective) at 46A The Causeway, March.

Received: 18 November 2024

Reply by: 9 December 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0928/F

Mrs Sally Batchelor, 6 Aspenwood Grove, March.

Change of use of existing business unit from class uses E(g), B2 and B8 to class use Sui Generis (retrospective) and installation of a fire escape at 8 Platinum Business Park, 59 Thorby Avenue, March.

Received: 22 November 2024

Reply by: 13 December 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0929/F

Mr A Jakeman, Fenland Swim Academy.

Change of use of existing industrial unit to Swimming Pool (Class F2(d) at 9 Century Way, March.

Received: 25 November 2024

Reply by: 16 December 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0938/F

Carl Wilson, 27 Newlands Avenue.

Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling at 27 Newlands Avenue.

Received: 25 November 2024

Reply by: 16 December 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0308/F

Inside Land Capital Ltd, Nottinghamshire.

Erect 15 dwellings (4 x 2-storey, 4-bed, 9 x 2-storey, 3-bed and 2 x 2-storey, 2-bed) with associated access, parking, landscaping and surface water attenuation at Land North of 147-159 Wisbech Road, March.

Received; 28 November 2024

Reply by: 12 December 2024

Recommendation; Approval

117 Public Participation

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

118 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 4 November 2024

Planning Meeting – 18 November 2024

Christmas Lights – 18 November 2024

Personnel and Admin – 26 November 2024

119 Matters Arising

Main Meeting; Minute 107 – MVAS; Councillor Field advised that the sign had been moved to Station Road. They were now able to download the information to send to CCC (for onward transmission to the police). Cllr K French hoped that the information would be properly processed. The new batteries had arrived and were ready for collection from the office.

Christmas Lights; Councillor Field thanked everyone involved for making the Christmas Lights-switch-on event a huge success. Cllr J French described travel disruption caused by the road closure, but it was agreed that there were other factors that contributed to the long delays (roadworks, an accident etc). The timing of the road closures for any switch-on event in 2025 would be discussed by the Christmas Lighting Committee next year.

120 Budget

The Clerk presented the proposals for the 2025/2026 budget to councillors, the documents having been circulated to all councillors on 12 November 2024.

Key points to note;

- The budgeted precept ought to allow March Town Council to build reserves during 2025/26.
- 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, CCTV, March Museum, March Street Pride and March Events. There is *currently* no provision in the

budget for the March Summer Festival, although the Town Council is now aware that a date has been set for a 2025 Festival (see minute 122, post).

- Details of the confirmation from NALC of the agreement reached regarding the Local Government Pay Claim for 2024/2025 and the rates of pay payable from April 2024 were circulated to councillors on 31 October 2024.
- March in Bloom/Street Pride made a request on 29 October 2024 for a 10% increase in their grant, to increase the annual grant from £7,000 to £7,700 to cover costs.
- It would be necessary to thoroughly review Christmas Lighting expenditure in February/March

It was proposed by Cllr J French and seconded by Cllr K French 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).

121 Grants and Donations

One application had been received from CAMSAR (Cambridgeshire Search and Rescue) who had requested £500 for the purpose of purchasing an all-terrain vehicle.

The application was declined on the basis that there were many funding streams available to CAMSAR and preference is, in any event, given to organisations principally supporting residents of March.

122 Summer Festival

Due to no/inadequate notice having been given to the Clerk for a member of the public to speak at a meeting, Marcus Phillips was unable to make a presentation to Councillors about the March Summer Festival or to request funding from March Town Council.

To allow any dispensation would be a breach of the Council's Standing Orders and set a dangerous precedent.

Neither the Mayor or other councillors on the Summer Festival committee (a non-council committee) would be able to make a presentation either, as they have a conflict of interest. Mr Phillips would need to send his presentation to the Clerk together with a full set of accounts and details of any other funding secured or applied for by the Festival Committee for Councillors to consider before any bid for funding could be entertained.

If in January, Town Councillors were minded to provide any funding, even if the 2025/2026 budget has been ratified, there was contingency funding available.

123 Infrastructure Delivery Plan – Fenland District Council

Councillors had been circulated with a copy of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan which the District Council is working to update, alongside the emerging Local Plan.

Councils had been asked to provide an initial response as to their requirements in relation to various infrastructure and rate the urgency of such requirement using the categories Critical, Highest, Middle and Lower priority.

The Clerk would report March Town Council's requirements to FDC after the meeting.

124 March Market - Location

Councillors were asked their thoughts about FDC's proposals to move the weekly market from the Market Place to Broad Street on a trial basis. This would free up parking spaces on the Market Places and traders were largely supportive of the proposals.

The majority of councillors voted in favour of the trial relocation, which had been in the pipeline since before Covid.

125 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

County Councillor Gowing advised of the reinstatement of the Chief Constable. He stated that, in terms of Environmental and Green Investment and waste, Fenland always performs poorly, possibly due to large numbers not subscribing to the brown bin service.

126 Fenland District Council Update

Cllr J French advised that, barring a few snags that were in hand, Broad Street was now completed.

The new toilet block was out for tender.

Due to the on-going problem of parking on the newly paved areas in Broad Street, 42 metal bollards would be installed.

Works outside Iceland would be starting soon and by the end of Spring, successful applicants for the shop-front funding would be finalised.

127 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:15pm.

Councillor G Christy6 January 2025
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 6 January 2025 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	G Christy A Woollard	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler M Purser T Taylor	M Field K French H Orbell N Spencer
	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk		S Lemmon S Taylor
	Public		4
	Press		1

130 Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillor John Gowing.

131 Police Update

Presentation/Minutes of the 2 December 2024 meeting were circulated by the Clerk on 2 December 2024. The next meeting date remains to be confirmed.

132 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 one additional planning application would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR24/0973/F

Mr Simon Hayes, 67 County Road, March.

Erect part single-storey part 2-storey extension to side/rear of existing dwelling including formation of annexe (single-storey) involving demolition of existing conservatory to rear and detached garage at 67 County Road, March.

Received: 17 December 2025

Reply by: 7 January 2025

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0999/F

Mr S Bushell

Erect 1 x dwelling and 1 x agricultural building and the retention of existing agricultural building at Land at School Grounds, Farm School, Creek Fen, March.

Received: 3 January 2025

Reply by: 24 January 2025

Recommendation; Approval subject to assurance that the occupation of the dwelling will be tied to the farm and agricultural store in perpetuity.

133 Public Participation

Mr Marcus Philips and Mr Clive Lemmon had contacted the Clerk (within the prescribed timeframe) to confirm their wish to speak in the matter of the Summer Festival.

134 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 2 December 2024

Planning Meeting – 16 December 2024

135 Matters Arising

None

136 Summer Festival – Funding Presentation

Marcus Philips, Chair of the March Summer Festival Committee (a non-March Town Council, separately constituted organisation) delivered a “presentation” to March Town Council to secure nearly £20,000 of funding from March Town Council for what would be the 25th anniversary of the event.

This sum is nearly double the previous sum that March Town Council had previously awarded.

Mr Philips had not been able to speak at the December meeting since the requisite notice to speak had not been served on the Clerk in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders. Mr Philips (and other members of the Summer Festival Committee, who were councillors) had been advised that, in addition to serving notice to speak at the next meeting (January), Mr Philips / the Committee would need to submit any *"presentation to the Clerk together with a full set of accounts and details of any other funding secured or applied for by the Festival Committee for Councillors to consider before any bid for funding could be entertained"*

A "budget" was sent to the Clerk on 19 December 2024 by Mr Philips, which comprised a list of projected costs for a 2025 event (no accounts or other details such as bids for alternate funding sources etc were provided).

The Clerk advised by email to Mr Philips on 23 December 2024 that the information supplied was wholly inadequate to support a bid for funding.

Accordingly, could the following also be provided;

- *"up-to-date bank statements*
- *a full set of accounts*
- *evidence of all grants/funding applied for*
- *details of any fund-raising activities etc and monies raised so far*
- *further information about the committee and its make-up*
- *information on how you plan to realistically deliver an event in less than 6 months as well as the "series of events involving the local community leading up to the festival"**

*the above-mentioned information requested is aligned with the Council's policy relating to applications for Quarterly Grants and Donations, albeit those requests are for very small sums of money.

The under-pinning rationale however, is that all applications for funding must be supported by comprehensive evidence, to justify an award of taxpayers' money.

A response was received on 29 December 2024; Mr Philips confirmed that the Treasurer (Cllr Christy) would send bank statements and accounts directly to the Clerk.

Mr Philips confirmed that the key positions of Event Manager and Stage Manager had **not** been filled, but those roles would be shared between other committee members.

He stated in his email that "we can now apply for funding based on proposed events and we are making contact with FDC and Arts Council regarding funding as well as MTC" thereby making it clear that **no other funding had yet been applied for**, despite assertions by the Committee, for over a year, that they should be able to secure a large amount of funding from the Arts Council to stage the event.

On 30 December the Festival accounts were submitted by email to the Clerk (but not copies of up-to-date bank statements).

All information was circulated to councillors upon receipt by the Clerk so that they could thoroughly review the information prior to the meeting.

During the presentation to councillors, Mr Philips was asked to clarify items in the budget, and to explain how some of the figures were arrived at - such as £8,400 for marquee/stage hire and nearly £10,000 for paid acts. Were there actual costings/quotations, or were they pure estimates?

The “budget” had caused some confusion since it seemed to suggest that some items of “income” was actual “cash-in-hand”, whereas in fact it related to potential grant funding that had not been applied for.

Attention was also drawn to a discrepancy of over £900 in the accounts, which Cllr Christy assured Councillors that he would investigate.

Councillors asked Mr Philips to explain what the event involved as there were no details of acts booked, or detailed information regarding events to be held in the run up to event.

Councillors continually expressed that they had no issues with providing *some* funding to the Festival Committee so that an event could go ahead.

However, for the large sum requested, it was essential to fully understand what was proposed and how it could be delivered.

Crucially, the event was only 6 months away...

Cllr Spencer, organiser of the March Armed Forces Fair, acknowledged that the over-all costs of staging events had risen some 14-16% in real terms recently, and a request that reflected this kind of uplift, rather than 100%, might have been more appropriate/realistic?

The Town Council had only been advised in November 2024 (after the budget had been drafted) that an event for 2025 had even been confirmed.

The confirmation **had not** been communicated until that time.

No minutes had been shared with the Town Council since February 2024, when the Clerk was still the Committee’s Secretary.

(By way of background, the Town Clerk in post had always acted as Secretary to the Festival Committee, given that the Town Council had essentially historically funded the event, once Arts Council funding dried up. The Town Clerk’s role was to oversee the committees’ activities, its expenditure, and to ensure against financial impropriety).

Cllr Field suggested that the Clerk would have known that event was confirmed if she was still acting as Secretary to the Committee.

When the previous, experienced committee disbanded in the summer of 2023, the Clerk had initially remained as Secretary and meetings were convened in order to attract new committee members to facilitate a 2024 festival. However, it had not been possible to appoint to certain key roles, the most significant of which being ‘Event Manager’. As such, no provision was therefore made in the Council’s November 2023 budget (for 2024/2025) for a 2024 festival.

By December 2023 it had become overwhelmingly clear that it would not be possible to stage an event in 2024. Committee members acknowledged that it would not be possible to pull together an event of the intended scale in 6 months.

In February 2024, on the basis that a full committee had still not been appointed and no funding had been provided by March Town Council for a 2024 event, the Clerk stepped back as Festival Secretary but attended the February meeting, took minutes and circulated them to councillors, as was common practise.

The Clerk has had no involvement with the Festival Committee since 12 February 2024. No further minutes had been forthcoming from the new 'Minutes Secretary' (Cllr Purser) since that time.

Cllr Purser acknowledged that, in spite of being on the committee for many years, he had not realised that the minutes were circulated to councillors.

In the absence of direct communication, or receipt of minutes, March Town Council had not been aware that an event for 2025 had been confirmed, as there had been no prior mention of it, from any source, notably Town Councillors.

Furthermore, Councillors on the committee were reminded that they knew when the Council's budget is prepared each year, and therefore it would be essential to make any request for funding prior to its drafting (October/November) for submission to Councillors at their December meeting. The Budget has to be ratified at the January meeting. Communication, observance of protocol and Standing Orders, and timeliness was essential.

There were clearly failings on all counts.

Mr Lemmon, former Town Clerk to March Town Council had requested to speak at the meeting. Mr Lemmon had been involved in the Festival Committee for over 20 years and acted as its Secretary and Treasurer during that time. He explained that he also spoke in his capacity as a taxpayer.

Mr Lemmon explained how the Festival Committee was formed and how it evolved from Colourscape.

He alluded to the fact that circulation of approved minutes of the Festival Committee to councillors had *always* been a condition of council funding, and queried certain breaches of protocol in the application process.

He mentioned the inaugural 2024 Estafest event was delivered with no initial funding, yet, through hard work and fund-raising, had managed to raise over £7,500 for good causes.

Had the Summer Festival Committee been involved in any fund-raising activities? [No]

Notwithstanding, the event had supposedly been advertised without any funding in place.

Mr Lemmon asked whether Arts Council funding had been applied for.

Cllr Field confirmed that an application was submitted just before Christmas.

The outcome would not be known possibly for 10 weeks.

Mr Lemmon asked why had this not been applied for sooner if there was such confidence that funding could be secured and an outcome would not be known until only a few months before the actual event?

Mr Lemmon also suggested that the staging of a one-off weekend festival carries significant risk in the event of inclement weather. There had been a few years when the weather was so bad that the number of helpers outnumbered actual festival-goers.

Mr Lemmon suggested that the Festival Committee went “back to the drawing board”, got its admin in order and start fund-raising using its own endeavours, rather than expecting the tax payer to almost fully cover the cost of the event, which he described as a potentially “risky project”.

Cllr French added that the previous committee had been very experienced in staging the event for a number of years, but the new committee had not adequately or confidently demonstrated their ability to deliver an event of this size/nature that could justify an award of £20,000.

Mr Lemmon urged Councillors to consider their duties and responsibilities very carefully before granting the funding, in light of the “questionable paperwork” and breaches of established protocols by Summer Festival officers (not March Town Council) that could expose the Council to challenge.

He intimated that in terms of the “public perception test”, the Council cannot be seen to be favouring an application for funding for an event/organisation simply because councillors were sitting on the Committee when the application process for the funding was flawed.

The Clerk advised that five councillors had an interest in this agenda item due to their involvement with the Festival. Their request for a “dispensation” to speak had not been necessary since their interest was not technically a pecuniary one, merely personal.

However, she encouraged councillors to be very mindful of their duties as councillors when making any decision in relation to the grant of Festival funding.

She reminded them that in the context of Quarterly Grants/Donations Applicants, Councillors involved in the Festival Committee had oft cited “availability of alternative funding streams” as a reason for refusal. This had effectively set a precedent in their decision-making.

She felt it would be dangerous to dismiss this specific consideration when determining an application for funding an event in which members of the applicant organisation had a vested interest.

To move the matter forward, Cllr J French proposed that the application for funding for a **2025** event be **rejected**.

This was seconded by Cllr Spencer.

5 councillors voted for the motion, with 3 against, and 3 abstaining.

As such, the motion to **refuse** funding was carried.

It was reiterated that the Council **would** be happy to provide funding for future Festivals, on the condition that protocols/standing orders were followed, funding was applied for in time (ie in advance of the budget), other funding sources explored and the application supported by comprehensive documentation and accounts. Minutes would also be expected to be supplied to March Town Council.

The Council has to protect itself against legal challenge and has a duty to account to taxpayers.

137 Local Highways Improvements

The deadline for submission of applications is Friday 10 January 2025. The Clerk had requested that all information be submitted pre-Christmas in order to collate and prepare the evidence and had completed the online expression of interest form.

Since there were 2 County Council divisions and 3 County Councillors, it was possible to apply for 2 schemes for 2025/26.

The Clerk would complete and submit the application for the widening of North Drive and the creation of parking bays. In support of this proposal, Cllr Field had provided a residents' petition. Unfortunately, the ambulance service had not yet responded to his FOI request for further information about incidents where parked vehicles had prevented ambulance access.

Councillors voted in favour of an application for a further MVAS sign for the town.

138 Christmas Switch-on Event

The Clerk advised councillors that she anticipated that Christmas Lights-related expenditure for £2024 was likely to be in the region of £24,000-£25,000 (compared to 2023 expenditure of just over £16,000), against a budget of £20,000.

Fund-raising and sponsorship in particular had been significantly down on 2023 figures.

The cost of the event was likely to increase *dramatically* in future years and a number of factors were highlighted;

- Wall bolt testing was previously only done every other year. This now needs to be carried out every year (over £1,800)
- Lights have never been PAT tested previously. This will now take place every year
- The switch-on is now a Tier 3 event. As such, a paramedic is required in addition to first aiders, so this more than doubles the SJA bill
- Private security is now required for the event
- Fire training is now required
- Full traffic management (in addition to a road closure) is now required for the delivery and installation of the tree in Broad Street
- The Council's insurance premium has risen significantly by virtue of the new lights (valued at over £100,000)
- There is no budget for replacement/repair of the new lights – the £20,000 present was vandalised having been in situ less than 1 week.
- FDC have strongly indicated that the event will require additional toilet facilities at the switch-on event.
- The entertainment/band costs have increased significantly
- The PPL/PRS (music licence) for the event has risen 300% from £270 pa to £725.
- The cost of the unmetered supply has increased dramatically following a 49% increase in September 2023.

- The major issue is the erection/dismantling of the lighting. If we use a contractor in future, this alone will blow the entire Lighting budget (£20,000 - £30,000). If Balfour Beatty provide electrical supervision for every occasion that our team erect or dismantle lights, this would also prove to be too expensive. Alternatively, there is potential for some of the committee members working towards the necessary qualifications (NRSWA and G39), but, this option is certainly not without its difficulties, complications or cost implications (willingness, numbers, availability, continuity, capacity, insurance).

Councillors were not prepared to discuss the matter until the February meeting.

In the meantime, the Clerk would prepare a full report including costings and proceed with part-organising an event for 2025.

There is Christmas Lights meeting later in the month.

139 By-Election

FDC Elections had confirmed that they had received the required number of requests for a By-Election to take place. It is anticipated that the By-Election will be held on Thursday 27 February 2025, if contested.

The cost of the by-election is likely at a cost of £6,000 to March Town Council and a further £2,820 for 3,611 polling cards to be printed/issued (approximately £8,820 in total)

Councillors voted in favour of polling cards.

The Clerk would notify Elections accordingly tomorrow.

140 CCTV – Quote for March Town Council

The Clerk had received a quotation from Ocular for the installation of a CCTV system linked to the control tower, following the burglary in March 2023.

Unfortunately, two systems were recommended but the respective cost was £7,116.95 & VAT and £10,755.47 & VAT and was considered to be beyond the budget.

The current CCTV system would be retained, which complements existing CCTV within the town.

141 Air Conditioning Unit – March Town Council Office

The Clerk advised councillors that the unit in the Clerk's office needed replacing.

The cost of a replacement would be £1,995 + VAT.

In the event that scaffolding was required, this would cost an additional £800-£1,000 + VAT.

Given that the Town Council's offices have no windows that can be opened, and the large front window that causes the front office to quickly over-heat, councillors authorised the Clerk to proceed with the installation of the replacement unit.

Following on from a comment made by Cllr J French about the requirement for planning permission when using scaffolding in the context of Listed Buildings, the Clerk will double check with the Planning Authority/Conservation Officer whether planning permission for scaffolding would be required..

142 Clerk – Work Telephone

The Clerk advised that she was spending significant sums of money on ‘phone calls on her private mobile and from her home landline. As such she invited councillors to consider whether they would be prepared to authorise the purchase of business mobile. Only a very basic device would be required as it would only be needed for making/taking calls.

Councillors authorised the purchase.

Cllr J French possibly has an old ‘phone at home that would be suitable for this purpose, and would update the Clerk further in that regard.

Cllr K French enquired about the ongoing issue with the office ‘phones and BT. The Clerk and Assistant briefly explained the protracted difficulties they were having trying to resolve the problem. Essentially, the BT OnePhone system is no longer supported, so it may be necessary to investigate other options/a replacement system.

In the meantime, an engineer visit had been requested.

Officers will follow this up.

143 Budget Ratification

The Clerk had not been advised of any changes to the Council Tax Base, thereby requiring an adjustment to the Precept.

No changes had been made to the budget.

As such, the budget and precept were **duly ratified** (proposed by Cllr K French, seconded by Cllr Woollard, all voted in favour).

144 IDB Drainage

Cllr Taylor updated councillors following a meeting he had attended recently as a member of the farming community to discuss the withdrawal by the Government of Environment Agency funding and the impact that this would have on future development.

143 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

Cllr J Gowing had reported no updates.

Cllr J French provided updates in relation to LHI, including Norwood Avenue.

144 Fenland District Council Update

The 2027 elections had been postponed until 2028.

FDC will become part of a unitary authority.

145 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed with one exception; Cllr Taylor queried the payment relating to VAT advice to Whitings.

The Clerk confirmed that this related to a written request from the Mayor (to the Clerk) in November to have a meeting with the accountant about VAT-related issues in connection with the Mayor's Charity Account and grants.

The Clerk duly sought advice from the Council's internal auditors to confirm the position.

Any instruction of this nature would, in future, need to be discussed at full council.

Cllr Christy agreed that he would pay this invoice.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:38pm.

Councillor G Christy3 February 2025
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 3 February 2025 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	K French	Acting Chair/Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler N Spencer	M Field K French M Purser
	Cambridgeshire County Councillor	J Gowing	
	Town Clerk	S Lemmon	
	Assistant Town Clerk	S Farmer	
	Public	1	
	Press	1	

148 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Woollard, Christy, Taylor and Orbell.
In accordance with Standing Order 3(p), Cllr K French was nominated to Chair the meeting in the absence of both the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor (nominated by Cllr J French, seconded by Cllr Purser).

149 Police Update

Cllr Christy had not provided an update.

150 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/YR23/0841/VOC	<p>Burmor Construction / Accent Housing. Variation of conditions 13 (Landscaping), 17 (materials) and 21 (list of approved plans) relating to planning permission F/YR22/0207/VOC (Removal of condition 3 (potential future pedestrian access points) and variation of condition 22 (list of approved drawings), relating to planning permission F/YR19/1068/F (Erect 48 x 2-storey dwellings and 2 x single-storey dwellings, comprising of 24 x 2-bed, 21 x 3-bed and 5 x 4-bed with garages to plots 18, 20, 21, 37, 43 and 49 only with attenuation basin and sub-station involving the demolition of existing buildings) – to allow changes to house types/schedule of accommodation) to allow changes to house types, addition of ASHPs, removal of sub-station, and to provide details of landscaping and materials at Land North Of Maple Grove Infant School Maple Grove March Cambridgeshire</p> <p>Revised proposals have been received in respect of the above. The revision is: Change of description to remove reference to condition 10</p> <p>Received: 22 January 2025 Reply by: 12 February 2025</p> <p>Recommendation; Noted</p>
F/YR25/0045/TRCA	<p>Ms Gemma Newell, Fenland District Council Fell a Common Ash Tree within a Conservation Area at West End Park, City Road, March</p> <p>Received: 22 January 2025 Reply by: 12 February 2025</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval <i>subject to replacement with 2x new trees (preferably ash trees to compensate for the huge numbers of ash trees lost in recent years).</i></p>
F/YR25/0044/F	<p>The Scout Association Trust Corporation Erect a two-storey rear extension to existing building at Scout Headquarters, Mill View, March.</p> <p>Received: 28 January 2025 Reply by: 18 February 2025</p> <p>Recommendation; Approval</p>

151 Public Participation

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

152 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Acting Chair/Town Mayor:

Main Meeting – 6 January 2025
Planning Meeting – 20 January 2025
Christmas Lights - 20 January 2025
Personnel & Admin Meeting – 28 January 2025

153 Matters Arising

Main Meeting, 6 January, Minute 133 – Cllr Field challenged Marcus Phillips being described as a member of the public, as opposed to an invitee. It was determined that the minute was not incorrect; Mr Phillips was a member of the public for the purposes of the meeting.

Main Meeting, 6 January, Minute 136 – a note from the Summer Festival’s Treasurer, Cllr Christy, was circulated to all Councillors on 13 January 2025 to clarify the account balance was correct.

(Bank Statements and Minutes were not provided as a matter of course, but were stated to be available upon request of “councillors”, notwithstanding bank statements had been requested as part of the application and were to be provided prior to the meeting.

A reply in response to the Treasurer’s email from C Lemmon was also circulated to all councillors.

Cllr Field was not happy with the *tone* of the minutes. However, he could not establish that the minute was inaccurate or factually incorrect.

The asterix on Page 2 would be removed, even though it is a correct use of an asterix to denote a footnote and the highlighted wording would remain unchanged.

Main Meeting, 6 January, Minute 142 – Budget Ratification. On 7 January, the Clerk was advised by the FDC Chief Accountant that the council tax base had increased from 6,928 to 6,945. The resultant increase per property would therefore be reduced by 13 pence (from £54.13 to £54.00. As this *did not represent a material change*, the Clerk has submitted the Precept Form to FDC without bringing this back to full council for [re]approval.

Main Meeting, 6 January, Minute 145 – Invoice for VAT advice from Whittings LLP emailed to Cllr Christy on 13 January 2025 for payment.

154 Personnel & Admin Meeting

Following the Personnel & Admin meeting on 28 January it was agreed that Councillor G Christy would report to the Main March Town Council Meeting of 3 February 2025 and request councillors to ratify all the recommendations and findings of the Sub-Committee. In Cllr Christy’s absence, Cllr K French recommended that the findings of the Personnel & Admin meeting be agreed/approved.

Councillors agreed with all said recommendations and findings.

The new Sickness Absence Policy and Procedures are formally adopted and shall be dated with even date.

155 Christmas Lighting

Further to discussions in this matter at the January meeting, the Clerk prepared a report for all councillors (circulated on 24 January 2025) regarding the anticipated cost of the 2024 Christmas lighting activities.

Unfortunately, the report/comparative quote awaited from a local contractor for the erection and dismantling of the Christmas Lights had still not been received.

Furthermore, the Clerk had also not received from Zurich definitive advice in relation to a specific enquiry raised by the Clerk regarding the use of a trailer at the switch-on event. (Zurich aim to respond to enquiries within 7 working days, which had now elapsed. As such, the Clerk had chased for a response on 3 February).

In her absence, Cllr Orbell had circulated her views about lighting and the switch-on event to councillors via email.

Cllr J French confirmed that the switch-on event could not be combined with the Christmas Market. This proposal been discussed many times previously and it was not a workable solution.

Cllr K French proposed that this matter be discussed at the 3 March meeting. Most of the invoices relating to the 2024 lighting expenditure will have been received by this time. In the meantime, it was agreed that the town council strongly wished to continue with the tradition of having Christmas lighting. The necessity for the committee to increase its fund-raising efforts was once again emphasised.

156 VE Day Event – 8 May 2025

Cllr Spencer had circulated to all councillors information relating to the VE Day event on 8 May 2025.

March Town was the first town to accept an invitation to take part in VE Day and is proud to display a Certificate of Grateful Recognition from Pageantmaster Bruno Peak CVO OBE OPR in the council offices.

On 8 May the Proclamation will be delivered by Mark Wilding at 08:00 outside the Town Hall.

Those gathered, including military veterans, the Mayor, councillors and members of the public will parade to Broad Street and the VE Day flag will be raised at 09:00 at the March Town War Memorial, followed by an act of Remembrance.

Bells will ring throughout the town at 18:30, followed by a gathering in West End Park at 20:00.

Choirs and all to sing “I Vow To Thee My Country” followed by The National Anthem.

The Beacon will be lit by the Mayor at 21:30.

Throughout the day, the eating of fish and chips is to be encouraged since fish and chips were not rationed by the then Prime Minister, Winston Churchill.

Fish and chip shops have been requested to decorate their shops for VE Day and this request is made to pay tribute to the brave fishermen and farmers and land girls of March who toiled the field to bring fish and chips to our tables.

Cllr Spencer advised that he was not requesting any financial contribution from the Town Council towards the event.

Cllr J French advised that special commemorative VE benches were available and proposed that March Town Council purchase 2 said benches for the town, potentially to be located in Broad Street.

This was seconded by Cllr Purser and all councillors voted in favour of this purchase.

157 Confidential Item

Under Section 100(A)(4) of The Local Government Act 1972 the public is excluded from the meeting for item number 157 on the 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.

It had been proposed by Cllr J French that Robert Skoulding be nominated to receive the Honorary Freedom of The Town of March (pursuant to Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by Section 180 of the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980). The honour is usually awarded to a valued member of the community or those who have served in some exceptional capacity.

Since the passing of his father in 2009, Mr Skoulding, in spite of his own health difficulties, has fund-raised tirelessly to enable to the purchase of over 30 defibrillators for the town, as well as fund-raising for their ongoing maintenance.

Without doubt, these devices have saved *countless* lives of residents and visitors to our town.

This was seconded by Cllr Purser, and carried by all.

Clerk to take necessary next steps relating to the scroll etc.

158 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

Cllr J French advised that the budget would be set next Tuesday, and was anticipated to be increased by the maximum amount.

Information had been received in relation to the Norwood Avenue LHI scheme; the detailed design is now complete. The Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) application has been submitted. However, due to the high volume of applications in recent months, the consultation process is expected to take place in approximately 5–7 months, which is disappointing.

159 Fenland District Council Update

The improvement works outside Iceland should be completed by April 2025.

Cllr J French has had discussions with Matt Wright; FDC may be purchasing a scissor lift for use by the Town Council which could be stored at The Base.

Cllr J French confirmed that the new Christmas lights were being stored at the St Johns chapels. She is currently exploring the possibility of securing a 99-year lease on these premises.

160 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

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

Councillor G Christy3 March 2025
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 3 March 2025 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	G Christy A Woollard	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler R Skoulding	M Field T Taylor M Purser N Spencer
		Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerks	S Lemmon S Taylor & S Farmer
	Public		0
	Press		1

163 Apologies

Apologies were received from H Orbell, K French and Cambridgeshire County Councillor, John Gowing.

Robert Skoulding was welcomed back to March Town Council, having been elected as a councillor on 27 February 2025 for the March East Ward.

The Clerk shared the sad news of the passing of former March Town Councillor (and 3 times Mayor of March – 2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2011-2012), Bernard Keane on 2 March 2025, aged 93 years.

A two minutes silence was held in his honour.

164 Police Update

Cllr Christy advised that meetings will now take place on an ad hoc one-to-one basis (but hopefully still at least once a month). Cllr Christy is in regular contact with Chris Arnold from the Community Policy Team, who has recently been involved in Closure Orders, ASB and drug issues. 2 males have been arrested for arson in relation to a boat on West End and also a mobility scooter. 22 further arrests have been made in relation to recent hare coursing activity and officers have committed to tackling parking at All Saints School. In total, 50 additional hours of policing per month have been promised to tackle ASB and parking issues.

165 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 4 additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR25/0118/TRTPO	Mrs Stella Green, Ely Diocesan Office, Witchford Fell 1 x Ash Tree covered by TPO 03/1967 at 177 Station Road, March. Received: 17 February 2025 Reply by: 10 March 2025 Recommendation: Cannot make recommendation at this stage. Application deemed incomplete (see Clerk's email of 18 February)
F/YR25/0131/TRTPO	Cameron Harris, 24 Laburnum Grove Works to 1 x London Plane tree covered by TPO16/1986 at Land East Of 24 Laburnum Grove March Cambridgeshire. Received: 19 February 2025 Reply by: 12 March 2025 Recommendation: Approval
F/YR25/0134/F	Mr & Mrs Walker 21 Knights End Road Erect a 2-storey side extension with integral garage, porch to front of dwelling and widening of access involving demolition of existing porch and changes to fenestration Received: 25 February 2025 Reply by: 18 March 2025 Recommendation: Approval
F/YR25/0136/TRCA	Cambridgeshire County Council – M Shafi Ahmad Fell a False Acacia tree within conservation area at False Acacia Tree High Street March Cambridgeshire Received: 24 February 2025 Reply by: 17 March 2025 Recommendation: Approval (can at least one of the replacement trees be a False Acacia?)
F/YR25/0144/F	Mr Constable Erect a fence (max 1.56m) at Land East Of 2 Prospect Road March Cambridgeshire Received: 27 February 2025 Reply by: 20 March 2025 Recommendation: Approval

F/YR25/0145/F	<p>Mr & Mrs S&T Rutterford & Hudson Agent: Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd. Erect 2 x self-build/custom build dwellings including formation of a new access at Land to The West Of 167 Gaul Road March Cambridgeshire. Received: 26 February 2025 Reply by: 19 March 2025 Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR25/0147/F	<p>Mr Stephen Tibble Formation of a dropped kerb to existing dwelling at 152 Creek Road, March Received: 28 February 2025 Reply by: 21 March 2025 Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR25/149/FDC	<p>Fenland District Council Demolition of existing building and erect a max 2.4m fence in a conservation area at 2 Broad Street, March. Received: 28 February 2025 Reply by: 21 March 2025 Recommendation: Approval</p>

166 Public Participation

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

167 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Acting Chair/Town Mayor:

Main Meeting – 3 February 2025
Planning Meeting – 17 February 2025
Christmas Lights – 17 February 2025

168 Matters Arising

Main Meeting 3 February 2025 - Minute 155: Zurich have confirmed that there is no issue with using the trailer on the Market Place as a stage at switch-on. Dan Fortuna and Alan Simpson will be undertaking G39 and NRSWA “signing and guarding” training so that the Clerk can apply for a Christmas Lights Attachment License once the street columns in Broad Street have been adopted by CCC.

Minute 156: On VE Day bench was ordered. It is due to be delivered in the next few weeks and be stored by Octavius pending installation. The bench will be installed outside the Town Hall and there will be an official unveiling ceremony.

169 Grants & Donations

March Bowls Club (Conservative Club). The requested sum of £500 was awarded. It is hoped that the Club will secure insurance going forward.

March Library – Summer Reading Challenge. The requested sum of £500 was granted.

170 Christmas Lighting

Further to discussions in this matter at the January meeting, the Clerk prepared a report for all councillors (circulated on 24 January 2025) regarding the anticipated cost of the 2024 Christmas lighting activities.

A local contractor was unable to provide a comparative, let alone competitive quote, for the installation and dismantling of the Christmas lights.

The Clerk reported that Dan and Alan had agreed to undertake the necessary NRSWA and G39 qualifications. This would provide a lifeline for the Christmas Lights and keep costs down to an acceptable level. The Clerk would ensure that both were booked onto the relevant courses at the earliest opportunity so that the Attachments License could be applied for by the Clerk.

The Christmas Lighting Committee is working hard to find ways to bring down the costs of the event and increase fund-raising activities. Going forward, however, it may be that the town could still have lighting, but possibly without an actual “switch-on” event given the ever-escalating costs.

The Clerk had not received any further invoices relating to the Christmas Lights, but her projected expenditure for 2024 looked to be accurate.

171 Allotment Update

The Clerk will circulate an email to councillors with a detailed update.

However, the waiting list for allotments is now the highest it has even been, at 63.

172 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

All email updates were being circulated by the Clerk as and when received.

Cllr J French had taken a motion to CCC re Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE), which received strong support. CCC will liaise with FDC accordingly as part of the Fenland Inspire Project.

The George Campbell swimming pool re-opened last week.

Progress is being made in relation to the 3G pitches across the District and Cllr J French has a meeting with the Estover Committee next week.

Works should be completed next week on the 10 additional parking spaces on the City Road Car Park.

173 Fenland District Council Update

All email updates were being circulated by the Clerk as and when received.

Cllr J French provided an update in relation to the toilets. A delay had been caused by information requested by MLC, but it is hoped that the works can start in May 2025.

174 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

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

Councillor G Christy7 April 2025
Mayor of March.

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 7 April 2025 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

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

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr AWoollard and County Councillor J Gowing.

The Mayor stated to councillors that there would be no discussion in relation to item number 7 on the Agenda (“Non-payment of invoice by Mayor of March”).

He stated he had taken some advice and would defer the discussion under Standing Order 10 (a) (iii) and sections 28 (6) and (7) for the Localism Act 2011.

There was no consultation, discussion or debate on the matter.

No evidence was provided of any advice taken.

The Mayor gave no indication of when or whether the invoice would be paid (as agreed and minuted), or when it was proposed that the item could be discussed (following deferral).

The Mayor refused to answer any questions or enter into any discussions whatsoever.

2 Police Update

No further meeting has taken place and no stats have been provided. A local youth is facing various charges and the police have increased their parking patrols.

Cllr J French advised that there had been many recent complaints and concerns about parking and speeding (notably Station Road and Elm Road). The Clerk updated councillors in relation

to the MVAS, having contacted CCC earlier today and advised councillors that all operatives would need to be qualified (G39 and NRSWA “signing, lighting and guarding”) going forward. A discussion ensued as to whether it was worth continuing to invest time and money into MVAS when the data collection demonstrated that speeding was well below the national average and very little seemed to be done with the data supplied to the police. A discussion ensued as to the merits of purchasing/installing cameras.

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.

<i>Application</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, Number and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
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No additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight’s meeting.

F/YR24/0893/RM	<p>Balfour Beatty Homes</p> <p>Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission F/YR22/1032/O to erect up to 125 dwellings with associated infrastructure, drainage and landscaping (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at Land West of Princess Avenue, March.</p> <p>Revised Proposals; amended and additional plans.</p> <p>Received: 26 March 2025</p> <p>Reply by: 9 April 2025</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR25/0165/F	<p>Elaine Cooper</p> <p>Erect a single-storey extension to rear of existing dwelling, involving removal of existing conservatory at 11 Elwyndene Road, March.</p> <p>Received: 17 March 2025</p> <p>Reply by: 7 April 2025</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR25/0195/F	<p>Mr Barry Chapman</p> <p>Erect a 2-storey rear extension involving demolition of existing conservatory and insertion of first-floor side window to existing dwelling at 3 Bittern Way, March.</p> <p>Received: 17 March 2025</p> <p>Reply by: 7 April 2025</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval</p>

F/YR25/0199/TRCA	<p>Gemma Newell, FDC</p> <p>Fell 6 x Elm trees, 3 x Ash trees and 1 x Sycamore tree within a Conservation Area at FDC-owned land, Broad Street, March.</p> <p>Revised Proposals: Amended description of proposal</p> <p>Received: 24 March 2025</p> <p>Reply by: 7 April 2025</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR25/0206/F	<p>Mr M Graham, 18 Gold Street, March.</p> <p>Erect 1 x self-build/custom build dwelling and detached garage at Land West of Cross Road, Knights End Road, March.</p> <p>Received: 18 March 2025</p> <p>Reply by: 8 April 2025</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR25/0209/F	<p>Storelogs Holdings Ltd, 20-24 Marwick Road</p> <p>Boston Renewables</p> <p>Installation of a 622.16kWp ground-mounted solar PV array at Land East of 20-24 Marwick Road.</p> <p>Received: 21 March 2025</p> <p>Reply by: 11 April 2025</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR25/0210/F	<p>Mr M Haydon, 46 Elwyndene Road.</p> <p>Erect a 2-storey extension to existing garage and conversion to form an annexe at 46 Elwyndene Road, March.</p> <p>Received: 19 March 2025</p> <p>Reply by: 9 April 2025</p> <p>Cllr Skoulding declared an interest in this application and took no part in discussions or voting.</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR25/0225/F	<p>Miss Joanne Kupyn, 8 Bramble Walk.</p> <p>Erect first-floor extension to side and single-storey extension to rear of existing dwelling at 8 Bramble Walk, March.</p> <p>Received: 24 March 2025</p> <p>Reply by: 14 April 2025</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval</p>

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 Town Mayor:

Main Meeting – 3 March 2025

Planning Meeting – 17 March 2025

6 Matters Arising

Main Meeting 3 March 2025 Minute 163: A letter of condolences (as well as an email) had been received from the President of the Association ‘Amitiés Abraysiennes Sans Frontières’ (A.A.S.F.) of the twin town Saint Jean de Braye in France in connection with the death of Bernard Keane. Email to be sent to Sylvia Keane.

7 Non-Payment of Invoice by Mayor or March

As above at Minute 1.

8 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

All email updates were being circulated by the Clerk as and when received.

Work on the March BMX Pump Track on West End Park has started, along with the improvements to the area of public realm outside Iceland.

9 Fenland District Council Update

All email updates were being circulated by the Clerk as and when received.

Cllr J French advised that 10 new parking spaces had been created in City Road carpark. The signage would be re-done to comply with legislation.

White-lining remained to be completed, and there was outstanding white-lining outside the Fire Station.

Cllr J French advised that she had put a motion to CCC requesting that CCC funded the missing lines and updated signage, but this was flatly refused.

Cllr Skoulding enquired whether the kerbs in Broad Street could be painted to increase their visibility for elderly residents, in particular given that the new lighting in town was appreciably dimmer.

The Clerk reported that she had received a few concerns about the illuminated trees and the possibility of the string lighting inhibiting the growth of the sapling trees in Broad Street. Cllr J French confirmed that the lighting was designed so that the trees would not be damaged by the lighting as they mature.

It was also confirmed that the bollards for Broad Street had been ordered to combat illegal and nuisance parking in Broad Street. Most were permanent, but there would be a few removable bollards to help accommodate events held in town.

10 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

It was questioned whether the Volunteer Centre Fenland should continue to receive a specific (annual) grant/donation in future if the Wisbech-based service provided little benefit to March. It was noted that the VCF website was also “undergoing maintenance”.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:05pm.

Councillor G Christy28 April 2025
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 28 April 2025

Present	Councillor	G Christy A Woollard	Town Mayor Deputy Mayor
	Councillors	S Court J French J Lawler R Skoulding T Taylor	M Field K French M Purser N Spencer
	Town Clerk Asst Town Clerk		S Lemmon S Farmer
	Public Press		0 1

11 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Orbell.

12 Police Update

Cllr Christy reported that regular meetings would perhaps be reinstated due to popular demand. E-scooter nuisance and fly-tipping was discussed, as well as 2 drugs-related convictions.

13 Minutes of Meetings

The following minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor;

Main Meeting – 7 April 2025

Christmas Lights – 14 April 2025

14 Matters Arising from the above Minutes

None

15 Nominations for Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2025/2026

Nominations were invited by the Clerk.

It was proposed by Councillor Spencer and seconded by Councillor Skoulding that Councillor A Woollard, the current Deputy Mayor, be nominated for the position of Mayor for the 2025/2026 term.

Cllr Field proposed that Cllr Christy remain as Mayor for a second term.

A majority of councillors voted for Cllr Woollard to become Mayor of March for 2025/2026.

It was then proposed by Councillor K French and seconded by Councillor Woollard that Councillor Spencer be nominated for the post of Deputy Mayor for the 2025/2026.

Councillor Spencer indicated his willingness to stand.

Cllr Court nominated Cllr Field and this was seconded by Cllr Lawler.

A vote split 7:3 in favour of Cllr Spencer was carried.

16 Report of the Town Mayor for 2024 / 2025 and the Mayor's Charity Donations

The Mayors Report was accepted by the meeting and is attached to these minutes as Appendix A (2 pages).

The Mayor has elected to distribute donations from the Mayors Charity Account totalling £6,500 (see further minute 18 (below)) to causes of his choice.

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

17 Written Report of the Town Clerk for 2024 / 2025

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

18 Affirmation re Mayor's Allowances

The Mayor affirmed that the Mayoral expenses received during this year of office and totalling £3,450.00p per annum had not been fully expended in the execution of his Mayoral duties.

The sum of £2,461.00 representing unspent allowance was returned to the Mayor's Charity Account on 14 April 2025.

19 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 28 January 2025. 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 3 February 2025.

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 Christy and seconded by Councillor Spencer, 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.

20 Resolution to Approve the Accounting Statements for 2024 / 2025

The Annual Accounting Statements for the financial year 2024 / 2025, 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 Purser and seconded by Councillor Christy, with all in favour, that such Accounting Statements be approved.
- b) The resolution to accept the Accounting Statements for 2024 / 2025 was, therefore, unanimously approved.
- c) The Mayor, Councillor Christy duly signed and dated such document as necessary.

21 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. Cllr Purser (as a Planning Committee sub), also declared an interest in planning matters at tonight's meeting and took no part in any discussion or vote.

*Application
Number*

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

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

F/YR25/0265/F

Miss Adele Whitcombe

Erect a two storey side extension with rear balcony involving demolition of garage and removal of chimney, first floor rear extension and erect porch to front of existing dwelling at 17 Brewin Avenue, March.

Received: 8 April 2025

Reply by: 29 April 2025

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR25/0271/F

Mr John Mason, Silberback Cottage.

Erect 2 x 2-storey garages involving alterations to existing access and formation of new access at Silverback Cottage, Whitemoor Road, March.

Received: 10 April 2025

Reply by: 1 May 2025

Recommendation: Refusal – over-development, concerns about usage/need for 6 additional garages. Are these not just annexes/living accommodation?

F/YR25/0272/TRTPO

Mr Shane Wildering, Milestone, Stevenage.

Works to 1 x Sycamore, 1 x Ash Tree and 1 x Cherry Tree covered by TPO 15/1986 at 1-5 High School Close, March.

Received: 10 April 2025

Reply by: 1 May 2025

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR25/0284/TRTPO

Mrs Sandra Howarth, 10 Saxon Way, March

Works to 1 x Oak Tree and 2 x Ash Trees covered by TPO M/2/465/17 at Wendreda House, Wimblington Road.

Received: 17 April 2025

Reply by: 8 May 2025

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR25/0285/F

Mr Michael Green, 30 Elwyndene Road.

Erect a single-storey extension to rear of existing dwelling at 30 Elwyndene Road.

Received: 10 April 2025

Reply by: 1 May 2025

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR25/0294/TRTPO	<p>Mr Affik Choudhury, Kingston (March) Ltd Works to 2 x Norway Maple Trees covered by TPO 05/1975 at Land West of The Old Rectory The Walnuts Fronting Elwyn Court, March. Received: 16 April 2025 Reply by: 7 May 2025 Recommendation; Approval</p>
F/YR25/0299/F	<p>Mr M Feast, 18 Newland Avenue. Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling involving the demolition of existing extension at 18 Newlands Avenue. Received: 16 April 2025 Reply by: 7 May 2025 Recommendation; Approval</p>
F/YR25/0304/RM	<p>Mr J White Reserved Matters application relation to detailed matters of access, appearance, landscaping and scale pursuant to outline permission F/YR22/0919/O to erect 2 x dwellings at Land South of 733 Whittlesey Road, March. Received: 16 April 2025 Reply by: 7 May 2025 Recommendation; Approval</p>
F/YR25/0314/F	<p>Miss Hanh Thi Dao, Newark Change of use of basement and ground floor from retail (Class E) to Nail Salon (sui generis) at 35 High Street, March. Received: 25 April 2025 Reply by: 16 May 2025 Recommendation: Approval</p>
F/YR250323/TRCA	<p>Applicant name unknown, 17 Wherry Close. Fell 2 x Ash Tree within a conservation area at 17 Wherry Close, March. Received: 25 April 2025 Reply by: 16 May 2025 Recommendation; Cannot make recommendation as insufficient information provided or justification as to why trees need to be felled.</p>

22 Standing Orders for Adoption

New Model Standing Orders had been published by NALC. The Clerk circulated these councillors on 16 April 2025. The new Standing Orders were duly adopted by councillors.

23 March Town Council “Specific Donations” – Review

A written motion was circulated on behalf of the Mayor on 23 April 2025. It was determined that this would be review in August or September, prior to preparation of the budget for 2026/2027.

24 Market Place Barrier

The Mayor had requested that this item be discussed. This item would be deferred to a future meeting when further information was available.

25 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 8:10pm

Councillor Woollard 12 May 2025
Mayor of March

Appendix A

It was a great privilege to be elected as the Mayor of March for the year 2024/2025.

I was fortunate to be able to attend some great events during my term. The first event was the lighting of the Beacon in West End Park to mark the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings. Appropriately my last event will be lighting the Beacon once again, but this time for the 80th Anniversary of VE-Day on the 8th May.

During my term I have attended 75 official engagements. It has been a great honour to attend many events across the county and wider as the Mayor of March. I have had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of many other mayors and dignitaries who have been an inspiration. The first engagement was the Mayor of Peterborough's Thanksgiving Service on the 5th May that Nicola and I attend. We attended the High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire's Garden Party at Elton Hall which was an amazing setting and that evening we attended the Independence Day event at RAF Alconbury for the USAF 501st Combat Support. We later in the year attended their winter reception on 5th December. We attended the Mayor of Peterborough's installation ceremony on 16th June, the Mayor of St Ives Civic Parade on 9th August, both of the Mayor of Peterborough's Fundraisers, the FDC Chairmans three events, the Mayor of Ely's fundraising event on 17th January and the Mayor of Ely's Civic service on 2nd February, the Mayor of Chatteris's event on 21st February, the Mayor of Huntingdon's Civic Service on 23rd March, and the Mayor of Market Deepings event on 28th March.

Of course we can't go without mentioning the amazing Remembrance Day Service that takes place in the town. As usual Lt Col Nigel "Spence" Spencer MBE and his team did a tremendous job. It was a privilege to lead the parade of councillors and to lay the wreaths on behalf of the town.

There were the two events for March that I held. The first being the Civic Service that had the theme of Harvest Festival. We had tractors and strawbales for the service and there were many dignitaries that attended along with the High Sherrif of Cambridgeshire.

The Christmas Carol service this year was attended by pupils, staff, family and friends of Burrowmoor School. It was a lovely service where the children sang a number of Christmas songs and hymns.

My greatest pleasure has been the supporting of events and causes for March. When I undertook the role of Mayor of March my promise was to do all that I could to help the town prosper and to build communities.

I have attended a wealth of events in support of good causes, community groups and businesses in March that I am very proud to have been a part of. There are so many events I have attended. These included attending a number of events and presentation evenings for 1220 March Air Cadets. I also visited All Saints School, Burrowmoor School, Cavalry School and Neale Wade Academy for events ranging from careers events, various celebrations and music shows. It was a pleasure to meet pupils and they never failed to have a whole host of questions for the Mayor. I have attended events for March Library, March Town Cricket Club, March Town Football Club, March Athletic Club, March Parkrun and March Junior Parkrun, where I now volunteer as a marshall each week, March Rugby Club with Scotty's Little Soldiers, Colin Bedford's badminton coaching anniversary (Colin taught me badminton many years back), and Fenland Poet Laureate. In relation to the Mayors allowance this has been used to cover the travel expenses for attending the civic engagements around the county and neighbouring county's, or for the arrangement of March Mayoral Events. Attending fundraising events has been paid for out of my own pocket. This I believe is the right thing to do as it is a matter of choice to attend the charity fundraiser events and pleasure to contribute. To this end from the allowance of £3,450 the amount used to cover civic engagements is £989 pounds. The balance has been retuned and paid into the Mayor's Charity account to be distributed to causes that support March.

I also wanted to do everything I could to help local businesses as well in any way I could. I spent a lot of time talking to local traders to understand the challenges that they face. I was also keen to create our own events to help bring footfall into the town, support local businesses and bring the community together. The first was the Minis in March Market Place. This was a great event that was organised in conjunction with the Cambridgeshire Mini Club and was well received by everyone. It was a glorious day and as part of the Mayors fundraising I held a raffle for my Mini Cooper S Clubman which raised £2,300 alone.

The next idea was to run a Farmers Fayre in the Market Place. This to promote local farm business and small businesses that use local farm produce in their goods. Various treats were available such as scones, cakes, eggs and a local butcher attended. Local coffee shops and cafes opened up specially for these events. The events in March Market Place have been supported by The Fenland Farmers group. By popular request more Farmers Fayres and variations of this will be coming soon.

These events have been totally self-funding and a great example of how the investment in the assets of March such as the Market Place can be used for the enjoyment of the community while helping the local economy even if on a small scale, as every little bit makes a big difference for small local businesses.

Throughout my term I have been continuing to fundraise through the various events. As well as the Market Place Events, and apart from giving away my car, I have run a number of raffles.

Unfortunately the Mayor's Ball had to be cancelled due to lack of numbers, a problem that has hit the events of a number of mayors across the county. I did though instead have a Spirits Tasting Fundraiser organised with Fensprits, a local distillery, that was well attended and enjoyed by all. Throughout my term I have raised £6,500 to distribute to my chosen causes.

There are three core charities that I know provide services in March these being Break, FACET and Camsight. I will be giving Break £1,500. FACET £1,500 and Camsight £1,100.

There are youth groups and local organisations that I would like to thank for their assistance in fundraising, again all of which I know do good work for March and have supported me during my year. The first are the March Air Cadets and the March Army Cadets to whom I would like to make each a donation of £400. I would also like to donate £400 to March Churches and £400 to Fenland Farmers for the support and assistance they have given me during my term.

I know it is very difficult for groups that are organising events for the town and of course music, arts and culture are things that can bring a community together and the type of events I am passionate about. I would like to donate £400 to the March Summer Festival working towards putting on the event this year for the 25 year anniversary. We are very lucky in March that there are two amazing music events happening this year and likewise I would like to donate £400 to Estafest towards making this year's event as successful as the first award winning event last year. There are two very special people I would like to thank.

The first is my wife Nicola who has worked so hard organising many of the fundraising events and who has attended civic engagements with me. Without her support it would not have been possible to achieve everything that we have been able to do this mayoral term.

The second person is Cllr Mark Purser. I know Mark was disappointed that he had to step down as mayor while I was Deputy. Cllr Purser has been there and supported all of my events and has helped in the background with organising, plus kept us entertained with his jokes! Cllr Purser it is very clear has the Town of March very close to his heart.

Another notable achievement is creating the Mayor of March Facebook page. This has been a great way to communicate out the work of the mayor and in just over 9 months is now up to 398 followers, so if anyone isn't following it yet be good to get you on it.

Finally, to say a big thank you to everyone that has supported me during this mayoral term. There are so many people to thank. In many ways it is a great pity it comes to an end as it only feels like it started yesterday. So thank you for giving me the privilege of being Mayor of March.

Appendix B

Mayor's Charity Account 2024 / 2025			
	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Net Profit</u>
	£	£	£
Balance brought forward			-
Estafrest Raffle & Tombola August 2024			220.00
Minis in March Market Place (August 2024)			2,340.00
Teas and Coffees Event (August 2024)			28.68
Civic Ceremony September 2024)			119.20
Farmers Fayre Raffle (September 2024)			246.50
Spirits Events Tickets (24) (March 2025)			600.00
Spirits Events Tickets (6) (March 2025)			150.00
Farmers Fayre Raffle (January 2025)			121.00
Spirits Event Sales Percentage (March 2025)			55.00
Spirits Event Raffle (March 2025)			112.00
Transfer of Balance of Unspent Allowance			2,461.00
Mayor's donation			46.62
Amount available for distribution			6,500.00
Donations to charities of Mayor's choice made in April/May 2025			
BREAK			1,500.00
FACET			1,500.00
Camsight			1,100.00
Air Cadets			400.00
Army Cadets			400.00
March Churches			400.00
Fenland Farmers			400.00
Estafest			400.00
March Summer Festival			400.00
Total			6,500.00
Balance carried forward			-
.....			
S. Lemmon			
Town Clerk			
28.04.25			

Appendix C

ANNUAL REPORT of The Clerk to March Town Council (2024/2025)

INTRODUCTION

This Report and the main meeting (formerly “Annual Assembly”) on Monday 28 April 2025 mark the end of the 2nd year in office of the current cohort.

A warm welcome to you all, and a special welcome to Councillor Skoulding who was elected onto Town Council in February 2025.

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

The regeneration of Broad Street that began in January 2023 was largely completed in the Autumn of 2024.

The major transformation, to revitalise the heart of March town centre, was the final step in a programme of inter-related schemes by different partners which attracted a total investment into the town of £12.6 million.

The fountain was warmly welcomed back to Broad Street in its new location adjacent to Malletts Jewellers.

Construction of the new toilet facilities (including modernised disabled toilets and family changing facilities) is underway and will be delivered later this year.

Representatives from the various agencies involved celebrated the culmination of the joint project with an official visit to the town. The visit included a poignant flag-raising ceremony at the restored War Memorial, with an official ribbon-cutting by Steve Barclay MP.

I think you will all agree that the town looks fantastic and the roundabout has vastly improved traffic flow. Further improvements will take shape this year, funded by the project underspend.

With Broad Street re-opened for business, the Remembrance could once again revert to its traditional format, with a parade through the town. With the Union Flag and flags of the British Armed Forces flying high on the four new flagpoles, it was wonderful to remember the fallen at the beautifully restored Memorial, that fittingly remains the focal point of the town centre.

As part of the project, Fenland District Council had budgeted for the replacement of the town’s redundant Christmas lighting.

The new decorations certainly did not disappoint, with the interactive “present” becoming almost as big an attraction for ‘selfies’ as the world-famous wonky Christmas Tree!

Once again, my sincerest thanks to the Town Council and all the Christmas Lighting committee who work tirelessly to light up the town and organise such a spectacular switch-on event.

Thank you to Lt Col Nigel "Spence" Spencer MBE for organising the event and beacon lighting in West End Park on 6 June to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day, an event which marked the start of the liberation of Western Europe in World War II.

Congratulations to Cllr Jan French for being awarded Freedom of the Town of March in April, an honour bestowed on account of her many years of service and dedication to the town and local causes.

Nationally, a General Election was held in July 2024.

COUNCIL

During May 2024, Councillor Gary Christy was elected as Mayor of March and Councillor Andrew Woollard as his Deputy.

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 83%, calculated as follows:

S Court	13 attendances out of 13	100 %
G Christy	12 attendances out of 13	92 %
J French	12 attendances out of 13	92 %
K French	9 attendances out of 13	69 %
M Field	12 attendances out of 13	92 %
(S Harris	4 attendances out of 10	40 %)
J Lawler	12 attendances out of 13	92 %
H Orbell	9 attendances out of 13	69 %
M Purser	13 attendances out of 13	100 %
R Skoulding	1 attendance out of 1	100 %
N Spencer	11 attendances out of 13	85 %
T Taylor	10 attendances out of 13	77 %
A Woollard	9 attendances out of 13	69 %

*The low attendance on the part of Cllr Harris has been due to work commitments and kick-boxing competitions both nationally and internationally. As a result of his inability to attend the requisite number of meetings, Cllr Harris tendered his resignation as a town councillor in December 2024. However, he remains committed to supporting young people in the community and making the town a safer environment.

Consequently, a by-election was held on 27 February for the March East Ward and Robert Skoulding was duly elected.

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 the Assistant Clerk.

Sadly, Sally retired from her role as Assistant Clerk at the end of March, and we welcomed Susanah Farmer to the team in February 2025 as Sally's successor.

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, with the Clerk working remotely outside of these days/times.

PLANNING

A total of 145 Planning Applications received consideration during the year, an increase of 10 applications on the previous year's total.

Approval was recommended in respect of 102 applications, 22 were the subject of comments, more information was requested in respect of 1 application.

Objections/recommendation for refusal were raised in respect of 19 applications.

DONATIONS AND GRANTS

During 2024/2025 financial year, donations totalling £2,024.92 were made to the following organisations;

FACT	£ 195.00
Friends of March Railway Station	£ 329.92
March Lions	£ 500.00
March Conservative Bowls Club	£ 500.00
Friends of March Library Reading Challenge	£ 500.00

Grants totalling £6,000.00 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
Defibrillators for March	£1,000.00

In addition, generous financial support was also given to March & District Museum and Estover Playing Field 2015 CIC. The final instalment to EPF 2015 CIC (of the 2018 agreement) was made on 4 November 2024. However, Councillors will remember that in August 2024 it was resolved to continue to provide financial support to the CIC to help improve supporting sporting facilities within March. Specifically, the Town Council committed to pay the sum of £80,000 pa for the next 3 years for the purposes of securing a 3G pitch at the venue. The payment of the £240,000 is conditional upon substantive delivery of the pitch by July 2027.

ALLOTMENTS

Since relinquishing some of its allotment sites in October 2004, the remainder are now fully occupied and a waiting list of 54 exists at the time of writing. The waiting list reached an all-time high in February with 63 on the list. At the time of drafting, there are currently 52 on the waiting list.

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.

The council's title to the allotment at Grandford has been upgraded from possessory to title absolute.

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. Christmas Lights. Christmas 2024 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. The 99-year lease signed in November 2015 was assigned to March Town United Football Club and will continue to be operated for the benefit of the community in perpetuity.
- G. Remembrance Day service – the parade returned following completion of the Broad Street project and record numbers attended the event.
- H. Cllr Christy organised two successful Food Fayres on the Market Place. A Mini car was raffled to raise funds – the first time we have had a car as a raffle prize in the town!

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.

I wish you all the very best going forward.

Sarah Lemmon – Town Clerk
28 April 2025