Personnel and Administrative Sub-Committee Meeting at 08:00 on Tuesday 13 January 2026 held online via Teams.

Present:	A Woollard	Chairperson
	N Spencer	
	J French	
	S Lemmon	Town Clerk

No apologies were received.

The Committee confirmed the following points;

a) The March Town Council Risk Assessment (circulated to P&A Committee members on 5.1.26) had been reviewed and adequately covered all areas of concern. The Clerk had made some minor amendments which were discussed and accepted by the Sub-Committee.

b) In particular, it was confirmed that;

1. All assets listed within the March Town Council Asset Register had been inspected with the exception of the Notice Board which has not yet been installed. The Clerk had emailed Matt Wright and Phil Hughes on 5.1.26 for an update. The board has been refurbished but needs to be inspected. If unsatisfactory, a replacement will be requested. Cllrs Woollard and French to decide a suitable location for the board to be reinstated by FDC.

2. In general, the levels of insurance cover were deemed to be sufficient. The additional Christmas Lighting (valued at over £100,000) had been added for the remainder of the financial year. However, if the lights are to be transferred for a nominal sum to the new separately constituted Christmas Lights Committee then asset register will be updated and the insurance quote adjusted accordingly.

3. Because of the discounts available, another five years contract with Zurich Municipal had been implemented in 2021. The Clerk will seek a quote from Zurich for 2026/2027 and renegotiate a further loyalty discount. Comparison quotes can be sought but it is likely that the 2026 quote will be considerably lower than expected following the removal of the Christmas Lighting as an insured asset of the Town Council.

4. The financial internal control procedures had been reviewed and considered adequate. The Financial Regulations had last been updated and adopted by

MTC on 2 June 2025 based on the new model regulations issued by NALC in March 2025. It is likely that new financial regulations will be published this year, in which case our own regulations would as soon as practically possible thereafter be amended. The Clerk receives regular notifications from SLCC, NALC and CAPALAC and is notified of any legislative changes or proposals that would require a review of our policies or procedures.

5. The Clerk will be reviewing all policies and procedures after year-end.

6. The physical security arrangements for the buildings, contents and other items had been reviewed and considered largely adequate.
   The new main doors had not been replaced as hoped pursuant to the grant of planning permission in Autumn 2022 due to the March Civic Trust's inability to secure grant funding. Planning permission has now expired. New quotes have been received, but funding has not been secured.
   Discussions with Historic England had seemed promising, but ultimately no funding had been awarded. Funding is becoming increasingly hard to apply for, let alone secure.
   Following a Fire Risk Assessment carried out in 2025 the Trust has been forced to implement a number of expensive measures and improvements including upgrading the fire alarm system, installing new emergency lighting, lightning stroke conductor test etc. Additionally, all internal doors need to be replaced (still to be carried out).
   A recent problem with the lift has been resolved but it is old and it will likely need replacing within a short time (c£40,000).
   The reserves of the Trust have been wiped out with the critical works that ensure the building is compliant.
   There is very little prospect of securing any further funding.
   Trustees are working hard and have been discussing options given the financial non-viability of the Trust.
   New leases have been signed by all tenants of the building.
   Exploring new office premises for March Town Council had been discussed and the Clerk/Committee will try to identify other suitable premises within town.
   The Clerk has to deal with all issues at the Town Hall which includes having to clean the toilets and respond to repairs, usual day-to-day issues etc.

7. The Council is observing all legal requirements.

8. The Christmas Lights are erected and dismantled each year using paid helpers. Any payments made from Council funds are agreed by the Christmas Lights Sub-Committee. The Clerk last reviewed the Method Statement and Risk Assessments in October 2025. These are issued to the team who erect the lights each year to agree and sign. The Christmas Lights Committee will now, of course become independent of the Town Council and they will administer their own risk assessments and make all necessary arrangements in connection

with the erection of the Christmas lights and organisation of any switch-on event.

Other recommendations/points to note;

a) Mrs Susanah Farmer commenced employment on 27 January 2025 to replace Sally as Assistant Clerk. Susanah has been a wonderful addition to the team.

b) The Clerk had updated the Assistant Clerk's contract to reflect the most current legislation, regulations and employment practice.

c) That the Town Clerk's and Assistant Town Clerk's wages be automatically increased in line with future National Salary Awards for Local Council Clerks as agreed by The National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services.

d) That the Assistant Town Clerk's days and hours continue as at present.

e) The Clerk is still working considerably longer than her contracted hours. The nature of the job is often chaotic and unpredictable. The workload has increased considerably as the role has evolved. The Clerk must be in a position to regularise her hours and take annual leave. A payment in lieu of untaken leave would be requested in March 2026.

f) A new cleaner was appointed in January 2026 on a trial basis. She will be taking 2.5 weeks annual leave later this month (pre-booked) so the Clerk will have to ensure that the toilets are kept clean for the café and officers use.

g) It is now compulsory for employers to enrol employees in a company pension scheme if the employee is of pensionable age. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk is enrolled in the pension scheme. It is likely that the new cleaner will also enrol.

h) The Civility and Respect/NALC Model Councillor Officer Protocol – a guide for councillors and officers in their working relationships with one another which seeks to reflect the principles underlying the Councillor Code of Conduct with the objective is to enhance and maintain the integrity of local government was adopted on 6 February 2023 by March Town Council. It is recommended that Councillors read this document [again]. The Mayor has during his term had to remind councillors about conduct and decorum at meetings. It is apparent that not all communications/emails are being read/actioned, and items deemed urgent are not always being actioned with the necessary speed.

i) No specific training needs were identified.

j) All councillors (barring one) have set up their new internal email accounts which are to be used for all council business in accordance the new IT policy. Dual factor authentication has been launched for enhanced security.

k) St Wendredas Closed Churchyard update; An application had been made to the Diocese for permission to carry out the necessary tree works. The Clerk will update accordingly.

l) A meeting is required to be held in terms of the ongoing issues at one of the allotments. It was agreed that the monetary judgements would need to be enforced.

m) There was a further issue in relation to another allotment tenancy that had been terminated. The Clerk and Mayor had had a meeting to discuss this matter and the Clerk would be responding to the "tenant" once again this week.

n) The Clerk explained there was an issue in relation to the Museum in so far as long-standing trustees had recently retired and it had flagged a legal procedural issue; The title register is registered in the name of the outgoing trustees which seemed to suggest that a Deed of Transfer to transfer the title would be required, as well as a license to assign the original Lease. The Clerk believed that a new lease could be entered into, that did not name individuals as trustees, which would remove the need to re-register the title every time trustees were appointed or retired. However, the council's solicitor had felt the best course was to apply to the Official Custodian for Charities to hold the land on the museum's behalf. The Clerk would discuss this further with the solicitor on her return to the office this week.

o) The Mayor's Charity account was discussed. This account, as discussed in a main meeting, now attracts a monthly fee (as per our other accounts).

p) The MVAS street lighting attachment licence was issued on 9 January 2026.

It was agreed that Councillor Woollard, should report to the Main March Town Council Meeting of 2 February 2026 and request them to ratify the above recommendations and all findings of this Sub-Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 09:15

Councillor A Woollard…… 2 February 2026
Mayor of March