

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

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

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

126 Apologies

No apologies were received.

127 Police Update

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

128 Planning Applications

Because of her position on the Fenland District Council Planning and Development Committee and her commitment to Paragraph 28 of the Fenland District Council Code of Conduct, Councillor J French declares a permanent personal interest and takes no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

Application

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

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

F/YR23/0949/PIP Mr John Green, Ely Diocesan Board of Finance, Ely
Permission in Principle to erect 1 dwelling at Land North East
of St Mary's Church, 335 Wisbech Road, Westry.
Received: 16 November 2023
Reply by: 30 November 2023
*Cllr Taylor declared an interest in this item.
Recommendation; Approval

F/YR23/0963/TRTPO Mr David Wilkins, 18 Wimblington Road, March
Works to Chestnut Tree covered by TPO M/2/465/17 at 18
Wimblington Road, March.
Received: 24 November 2023
Reply by: 15 December 2023
Recommendation; Approval

F/YR23/0975/VOC Cannon Kirk (UK) Ltd
Variation of conditions 2,3,6 and 7 of planning permission
F/YR20/0473/F (Erection of 9 dwellings comprising 3 single-
storey (1 x 2-bed and 2 x 3-bed) and 6 x 2-storey (3 x 5-bed, 1
x 4-bed and 2 x 2-bed) involving demolition of existing
buildings to enable works to start prior to conditions being
formally discharged at Land North West of 12 Knights End
Road, March.
Received: 23 November 2023
Reply by: 14 December 2023
Recommendation; Approval

129 Public Participation

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

130 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 6 November 2023
Planning Committee – 20 November 2023
Christmas Lights – 20 November 2023

131 Matters Arising

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

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

132 Budget

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

Key points to note;

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

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

133 CCTV Renewal

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

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

134 Grants & Donations

Three (3) applications had been received;

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

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

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

135 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

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

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

Civil Parking Enforcement is moving forward slowly.

136 Fenland District Council Update

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

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

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

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

137 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

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

Councillor K French8 January 2024
Mayor of March.