

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

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

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

154 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Purser and Woollard.

155 Police Update

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 7 February 2024.

156 Planning Applications

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

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

F/YR23/0696/O

Barratt David Wilson Homes Cambs

Pegasus Group (Agent)

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

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

Received: 18 January 2024

Reply by: 1 February 2024

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

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

F/YR24/0041/F

Mr & Mrs Richmond, 9 Richmond Avenue, March

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

Received; 24 January 2024

Reply by: 14 February 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0053/TRCA

March Cruising Club

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

Received: 25 January 2024

Reply by: 15 February 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0046/O

Mr Patrick Wilkinson, 1 Wigstones Road, March.

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

Received: 2 February 2024

Reply by: 23 February 2024

Recommendation; Objection – over-development, parking issues.

157 Public Participation

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

158 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 8 January 2024

Personnel and Admin Committee 16 January 2024

Planning Committee – 22 January 2024

Christmas Lights Working Party – 22 January 2024

159 Matters Arising

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

160 Christmas Lights Update

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

161 Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS) Update

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

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

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

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

Matters to be revisited in March.

162 Farming & Flooding Quarterly Update

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

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

163 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

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

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

164 Fenland District Council Update

Cllr J French provided a number of updates;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

165 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

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

Councillor K French4 March 2024
Mayor of March.