

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL.

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 6th December 2021 in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	K French R Jack	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	SR Court CK Elkin R Johnson RF Skoulding RW White	AR Donnelly J French MW Purser G Tustin
	County Councillor		JW Gowing
	Town Clerk Asst Town Clerk		C Lemmon GSD Wilkinson
	Public		None

109 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Connor.

110 Police Update

A written report was circulated on 24th November 2021 relating to the previous liaison meeting held on 28th October 2021.

A further meeting was held on 1st December 2021 and these minutes were distributed on 2nd December 2021.

111 Planning Applications

Because of their position on the Fenland District Council Planning and Development Committee and their commitment to Paragraph 28 of the Fenland District Council Code of Conduct, Councillors Connor, J French and Purser declare a permanent personal interest and take no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

It is also noted that, due to his involvement in the building industry, Councillor Skoulding does not take part in any discussions relating to planning issues.

The afore-mentioned Councillors always leave the debating table for the duration of this agenda item.

It was agreed that three additional planning applications would be discussed.

<i>Application Number</i>	<i>Name and address of applicant, details of application, and recommendation of March Town Council</i>
F/YR21/1192/RM	<p>Mr & Mrs Topping, 7 Mill Hill Lane, March. Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission F/YR20/0335/O to erect 2 x dwellings at Land South and West of 4-5 Mill Hill Lane, March. Revised proposals have been received in respect of the above. The revision is: Layout amendments. Received: 23 November 2021. Reply by: 7 December 2021. Recommend approval.</p>
F/YR21/1235/VOC	<p>Mrs L Pluckrose, 27 City Road, March. Variation of condition 09 to enable amendment to approved plans of planning permission F/YR14/0034/F (Erection of a 2-storey 4-bed dwelling and detached double garage involving demolition of existing dwelling and buildings) at 194 Whittlesey Road, March. Received: 17 November 2021. Reply by: 8 December 2021. Recommend refusal. The original design is aesthetically preferable for this location.</p>
F/YR21/1275/F	<p>Mr Guy Clandillon, Guy James Ltd, 3 Limetree Close, Westry, March. Erect 3 x dwellings (2-storey 4-bed) (part retrospective) at Plots 1-3, Land North of Woodville, Wisbech Road, Westry, March. Received: 16 November 2021. Reply by: 7 December 2021. Recommend approval.</p>
F/YR21/1320/F	<p>Mr J Overland, The Bungalow, Coleseed Road, March. Erect a dog kennel block, a day care unit, an office cabin, and a 1.8m high boundary fence, including the associated change of use of land to sui generis (domestic/commercial) and the formation of an access at The Bungalow, Coleseed Road, March. Received: 24 November 2021. Reply by: 15 December 2021. Recommend approval.</p>
F/YR21/1343/O	<p>Mr M Henson c/o Swann Edwards Architecture. Erect up to 9 x dwellings (outline application with all matters reserved) at Land East of 137 Upwell Road, March. Received: 29 November 2021. Reply by: 20 December 2021. Recommend approval.</p>

- F/YR21/1345/TRTPO Mr Jonathon Chandler, 4A St Peters Road, March.
Works to 1 x Lime tree and 1 x Willow tree covered by TPO 15/1988 at Springfield Rest Home, 63 The Causeway, March.
Received: 16 November 2021.
Reply by: 7 December 2021.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR21/1347/F Ms Naomi Largerman-Warby, 2 Sycamore Close, March.
Erect a single-storey side extension to existing dwelling at 2 Sycamore Close, March.
Received: 24 November 2021.
Reply by: 15 December 2021.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR21/0887/F Mr P Burke, Force One Ltd, Unit 8 Arthur Park, 20 Thorby Avenue, March.
Erect 1 x office/workshop, 1 x vehicle workshop and 1 x training centre, 2.4m high (approx.) fence and formation of car park and associated infrastructure at Land North West of Middle Level Commissioners, Whittlesey Road, March.
Revised proposals have been received in respect of the above. The revision is: Amended Location Plan H6537/02, revision A Amended site layout plan H6537/07, revision B Response to Highways comments, Amended Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy.
Received: 13 December 2021.
Reply by: 17 December 2021.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR21/1352/F Paul Gillings, JD Wetherspoon Plc, Wetherspoon House, Central Park, Reeds Crescent, Watford.
Installation of external insulation and cladding to walls and roof at The Hippodrome, Dartford Road, March.
Received: 1 December 2021.
Reply by: 22 December 2021.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR21/1367/LB Rob Tinworth, 36 High Street, March.
Internal and external works to Listed Building including replacement windows, lintel and staircase, and installation of stud walls and reinstate fireplace at 36 High Street, March.
Received: 2 December 2021.
Reply by: 23 December 2021.
Recommend approval.

112 Public Participation

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

113 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Council Meeting of 1st November 2021.

Planning Sub-Committee Meeting of 15th November 2021.

Christmas Lights Working Party Meeting of 15th November 2021.

114 Matters Arising

Re Main Council Meeting of 1st November 2021:

Minute 102/18.10.21.Xmas Lights: The Clerk reported that he had emailed Garry Edwards on 2nd November to enquire about the “Iceland” lamp posts. A response received that same day indicated that he thought the work had been completed.

In consequence, the Clerk e-mailed Councillor Elkin to get him to check the veracity of his previous comments. Subsequently, all problems have been resolved.

Minute 104 Point d: Councillor J French reported that a walk-through would be installed to the rear of the Further Education Centre to allow access to the defibrillator. However, at this point in time, a timescale could not be provided.

115 Budget for 2022/23

The Clerk presented the proposals for the 2022 / 2023 budget and precept.

The Clerk also informed Councillors of the following:

- a) At this point in time, Towns and Parishes did not have to work under the same Government constraints that Districts and Counties were bound by i.e. a restricted rise in Council Tax charges.
- b) Towns and Parishes could, in the future, be requested to undertake more additional functions that Districts and Counties currently undertook but may decide to cut back due to budget constraints.
- c) The budget presented took account of the economic climate and likely changes to future precept rules. It had been set to maintain the services and support currently provided whilst ensuring adequate reserves.
- d) Due to the possibility of the FDC tax-base estimate changing, it would be necessary to approve the budget and precept in principle at this meeting and then ratify or amend the figures accordingly at the 10th January 2022 meeting.

In particular, the Clerk highlighted the following points within the budget:

- a) Maintaining relatively high contingencies due to the unpredictable nature of local politics in possibly having to provide unexpected support.
- b) Continued support for the town’s CCTV.
- c) Continued support for March Town FC Estover CIC (previously known as Estover Playing Field 2015 CIC).
- d) Continued support for March Museum and March Street Pride.

Following discussions, it was unanimously agreed that the budget and precept be accepted without amendment (Proposer Councillor J French, Seconder Councillor Purser).

The figures accepted equated to a budget of £301,320 and a precept requirement of £320,000.

It was agreed that these figures would be ratified (following amendment if necessary) at the 10th January 2022 meeting.

Full details relating to the budget and precept will be included as an appendix to the 10th January 2022 minutes, at which time all outstanding items will have been finalised.

116 Positioning of Replacement Town Toilets

Councillor J French reported that funding will be made available for the provision of new public toilets in conjunction with the High Street/Broad Street Refurbishment Scheme. What has not been agreed upon, however, is the best place for these to be situated.

Discussions ensued and the following points were agreed:

- a) A location within or adjacent to the Leisure Centre was not appropriate and too far from the town centre.
- b) If we are to encourage people to visit our town centre shops and facilities, it is necessary to provide public toilets in that area.
- c) Since the “old mans’ shelter” is due to be demolished, it was felt that the preferred positioning of the replacement toilets should be in a similar area to the one already occupied.
- d) The two options are:
 - i) Demolish the current toilet block and move the new one a short distance to the left or right.
 - ii) Completely refurbish the current toilet block and move any planned seating to either side thereof.
- e) If the refurbishment option was accepted, possibly the most economically viable solution, it would be necessary to do so in a proper manner. Unlike the current toilets, it is essential that the refurbished edition allowed chemicals/bleach to be used on the chosen materials to ensure a clean user-friendly environment.

It was agreed that the Clerk should notify Phil Hughes (FDC) of March Town Council’s decisions.

117 Grants and Donations

No applications for funding had been received during the last quarter.

118 Trees

Councillors discussed various suggestions that had been made regarding tree planting to commemorate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee but considered many other options were available.

It was suggested, therefore, that a Diamond Jubilee Sub-Committee be formed to

- a) establish the most suitable sites for tree planting and
- b) decide upon the preferred type of plaque required (also to commemorate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee), the wording thereon and a suitable location.

It was agreed that the Sub-Committee should comprise of Councillors K French (Chair), J French, Johnson, Skoulding and White.

The recommendations of the Sub-Committee should be brought back to a future Main Council Meeting for ratification and approval.

119 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Councillors J French and Gowing then reported as follows:

- a) £1.51 million additional funding for March has been agreed by the Combined Authority.
- b) Discussions are ongoing regarding the railway underpass at Stonea. There is the possibility that this may be closed and automated gates installed on the road that crosses the railway line.

120 Fenland District Council Update

Councillor J French reported that:

- a) City Fibre will commence cable-laying works within town on 12th January 2022.
- b) 21.5 acres of land, situated between their Gaul Road housing development and the bypass, are due to be transferred from Cannon Kirk to Fenland District Council in Spring 2022. This could provide another ideal site for tree planting.

121 Schedule of Accounts

The Schedule of Accounts, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20pm

Councillor K French10th January 2022.
Mayor of March.