

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 7 August 2023 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

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

70 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Harris.

71 Resignation of Mayor

On 2 August 2023, a letter from the Mayor, Cllr M Purser was circulated to all councillors by the Clerk, advising that Cllr Purser would sadly be retiring from his position as Mayor of March on grounds of ill health. Cllr Purser delivered an outgoing speech to councillors, thanking them for their support and wishing his successor a successful term of office. Cllr Purser would be remaining as a councillor on March Town Council and is committed to working hard for the benefit of the town and our community.

72 Appointment of Mayor

Following the retirement of Cllr Purser as Mayor of March, nominations were invited for a new Mayor to be appointed for the remainder of the 2023/2024 Mayoral term.

Cllr Purser proposed Cllr K French. This was seconded by Cllr Taylor.

Cllr Orbell proposed Cllr Field. This was seconded by Cllr Court.

The decision was taken to the vote, with the majority voting in favour of Cllr K French.

Cllr K French was duly elected as Mayor of March.

73 March Town Council Events/"Christmas Cracker"

Councillors had recently been approached by a member of the public who had enquired as to whether the "Christmas Cracker" senior citizens event organised by March Town Council from 1999 to 2019 could resume. Since a decision had been taken by councillors to discontinue the event, a discussion about the viability of hosting the event once again was therefore required.

The former Clerk to March Town Council, Clive Lemmon, had registered his wish to speak at the meeting with the Clerk on 2 August 2023 (in accordance with the Town Council's Standing Orders) in connection with this agenda item.

Mr Lemmon, who had organised the event from 1999-2019 explained that, whilst Covid-19 was the catalyst for the demise of the event, the event had been losing popularity over many years and numbers were down year-on-year. He presented a number of other factors to councillors for consideration (including retirement of the entertainers, rapidly rising costs, a lack of volunteers, care homes now providing entertainment, retirement of the provider of the sound system, difficulties regarding the classification of "senior citizen", risk assessments and potential SAG requirements) that he had experienced during his time as organiser of the event. He suggested that if the event was to continue, that it be organised by someone other than the Town Council, with the option of a March Town Council grant/donation being available/applied for.

Councillors discussed the various issues at length.

Cllr Spencer advised that a veterans Christmas Lunch had been organised.

Cllr Christy advised that FACT would be organising a Christmas event for senior citizens (date to be confirmed) which would be opened up to residents of the town of March.

Town councillors unanimously voted in favour of the discontinuance of the Christmas Cracker as an event run by March Town Council, but would happily support the FACT-run event.

74 Police Update

There had been no meeting in July due to staff holidays, although July statistics were circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk on 7 August 2023. The next Police Liaison meeting will take place on 11 August 2023.

75 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

F/YR22/0835/VOC

Mr J Green, Ely Diocesan Board of Finance c/o Headley Stokes Associates, Huntingdon.

Variation of condition 11 (access), 12 (turning and parking) and 21 (condition listing approved plans) relating to planning permission F/YR19/1106/F (Erect 4 dwellings (4 x 2-storey, 2-bed) and associated works) to enable amendments including; access redesign (including revised turning head and footpath), attenuation pond redesign and creation of pedestrian access to rear of dwellings (resulting in reduction of private gardens to plots 1-3) for full details refer to schedule of amendments at Land East of St Mary's Church Hall, Wisbech Road, Westry.

The revision is; Turning head reinstated and tracking indicated, fence to rear of plots alongside pedestrian access revised to 1.5m high fencing with trellis above.

Received: 19 July 2023

Reply by: 2 August 2023

Recommendation: Approval

F/YR23/0583/F

Mr Melton, SDM Fabrications Ltd c/o Swann Edwards Architecture.

Erect an extension to side and rear of existing building involving the demolition of existing rear extension at 2 Foundry Way, March.

Received: 17 July 2023

Reply by: 7 August 2023

Recommendation; Approval

****Concerns regarding neighbour consultation.**

F/YR23/0593/O

Mr D Sawyer and Mr V Rowbottom c/o Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd.

Erect up to 2 x dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at Land North of 15 Badgeney End, March.

Received: 18 July 2023

Reply by: 8 August 2023

Recommendation; Object

Development outside the development area boundary, dwellings not work-place dwellings, site located within Flood Zone 3.

F/YR23/0611/F

Mr Martin Turner, 52 Eastwood Avenue, March.

Agent: Architektas, London.

Erect a 2-storey side extension and single-storey front and rear extensions to existing dwelling at 52 Eastwood Avenue, March.

Received: 2 August 2023

Reply by: 23 August 2023

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR23/0632/TRTPO

Mr Teodore Pandyotov, Milestone, Stevenage
SP Landscapes and Tree Contractors, Bury St Edmunds.
Fell 1 x Ash Tree and 1 x Sycamore Tree and works to 7 x
Sycamore Trees, 1 x Ash tree, 6 x Horse Chestnut Trees, 8 x
Elm Trees, 1 x Pine tree, 3 x Hawthorns, 1 x Oak tree, 1 x
Silver Birch tree and 1 x Elder covered by TPO 03/1967 at
Street Record Footpath from Thornton Road to New Park,
March.

Recommendation; Object

**No tree survey submitted. No evidence of disease to justify
the felling of the ash or sycamore. No information as to
requirement for the works.**

F/YR23/0640/F

Mr D Mundy, 50 Manington Place, South Wootton.
Agent: Nick Seaton, Anglia Building Consultants, Outwell.
Erect 2 dwellings (2-storey, 2-bed) at Land West of 19 Alpha
Street, March.

Received: 2 August 2023

Reply by: 23 August 2023

Recommendation; Approval

76 Public Participation

See Minute number 73 (above).

77 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 3 July 2023

Planning Committee – 17 July 2023

78 Matters Arising

Re; Annual Meeting – 3 July 2023

Minute No 65 – The Market Square bicycle racks should be installed this week or next. Two more cycle racks had also been acquired for town.

79 Allotments Update

Cllr Taylor advised that ragwort was prolific this year. However, matters were in hand.

80 Planning Guidelines

Guidelines drafted by Cllr Christy had been circulated to all councillors. These guidelines would serve as a guide to both councillors and members of the public, and would be published on the Town Council's website, once approved. It was proposed by Cllr J French that the guidelines be adopted, and seconded by Cllr Field.

Cllr J French thanked Cllr Christy for his hand in the preparation of this document and the other new and updated policies and procedures.

81 March Town Council Policies & Procedures

In the course of a continuing review of the Town Council's policies and procedures, a number of documents had been circulated to councillors for their consideration, including a (i) new Grants Policy, Guidelines and Application Form, (ii) Procurement Procedure and Policy, (iii) Data Protection and GDPR Policy (iv) Privacy Notice and (v) Complaints Policy.

It was proposed by Cllr Woollard that these be adopted by March Town Council, and this was seconded by Cllr Field.

82 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

Cllr J French had recently attended a Community Safety Partnership meeting and a CCC representative advised that funding was available for 3 cameras at Mill View, City Road and Badgeney Bridge/South Drive. Cllr J French to follow this up.

LHI – cushions were installed on both Creek Road and Estover Road last week. These were considered to be wholly ineffective. An official complaint will be lodged and no payment by MTC to be authorised until the situation is remedied.

There was no update as yet on either potholes or the Nene Parade Survey.

Cllr Gowing advised that there was a pilot scheme being launched in Friday Bridge for heat source pumps. A meeting was being held on Tuesday 8 August at Dottie's Tea Rooms.

The library was now trialling a "plus hours" scheme. A press release (including registration details) is expected soon.

Cllr Gowing suggested that MTC fund the Citizens Advice Bureau service operating at Wimblington.

Cllr J French and Cllr Field advised that MTC had given substantial financial assistance to the CAB in the past.

However, CAB had failed to deliver what they had promised under the terms of the Town Council's donation/grants. Cllr J French explained that he CAB already receives a significant sum of money from FDC. Indirectly, MTC continues to fund the service.

83 Fenland District Council Update

The High Street works were progressing well. The dove in the fountain has now fledged and the fountain will be dismantled in the next few weeks. The petition to relocate the fountain will be presented to Cabinet in September, with advice to be taken from Historic England as to the suitability of all locations. The toilets will be demolished earlier than originally planned. Architect’s drawings for the new toilets are expected shortly. Temporary toilets are currently being costed and will be installed following demolition, to include a “changing places” toilet that is disability friendly.

84 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

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

Councillor K French4 September 2023
Mayor of March.