

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL.

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 7th December 2020 held via “Zoom” commencing at 7.15pm.

Present	Councillor	K French R Jack	Town Mayor Deputy Town Mayor
	Councillors	DW Connor AR Donnelly J French MW Purser G Tustin	SR Court CK Elkin R Johnson RF Skoulding RW White
	County Councillor		J Gowing
	Town Clerk Asst. Town Clerk		C Lemmon GSD Wilkinson

Public / Press No members of the public or press (although it was offered within the agenda notice) had requested permission to access the MTC “Zoom” group to witness proceedings.

To allow the meeting to take place via “Zoom”, and as agreed at the 6th April 2020 Main Council Meeting, Standing Orders are suspended until such time as the coronavirus epidemic abates.

114 Apologies

No apologies were received.

115 Police Update

No police were in attendance but a written report had been circulated on 1st December 2020.

116 Planning Applications

Because of their positions 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 and J French declare a permanent personal interest and take no part in discussions relating to planning matters.

It was also noted that, due to their involvement in the building industry, Councillors Purser and Skoulding would not take part in any discussions relating to planning issues.

The afore-mentioned Councillors remained visible during this agenda item but all other members observed that their microphones were muted for the entire time.

It was agreed that two additional planning application would be discussed.

*Application
Number*

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

F/YR20/0979/F

A & S Butt & Vawser, 105 Nene Parade, March.
Alterations to 1 x 2-bed holiday let to form a 4-bed dwelling including the erection of a 2-storey extension and demolition/alterations to 1 x 1-bed holiday let at Holiday Let 1, 105 Nene Parade, March.
Revised proposals have been received in respect of the above. The revision is: Revised location plan to reduce application site, design and parking amended as a result.
Received: 25 November 2020.
Reply by: 9 December 2020.
Recommend approval.

F/YR20/1078/O

Mr John Mortlock, 5 Windsor Drive, March.
Erect a dwelling (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) involving the demolition of existing garage/store and garden room at Land West of 8-9 Hawthorne Grove, Accessed from Acacia Grove, March.
Received: 17 November 2020.
Reply by: 8 December 2020.
Recommend approval.

F/YR20/1084/F

Mr Mark Hughes, 56 Wigmore Lane, Luton.
Erect 1 x dwelling (2-storey 4-bed) and detached garage involving the temporary siting of a caravan and storage container (during construction) at The Bungalow, 340 Wisbech Road, Westry, March.
Received: 25 November 2020.
Reply by: 16 December 2020.
Recommend approval.

F/YR20/1085/F

Mr Carl Blaney, 22 Nene Parade, March.
Erect a detached office/shed with wood stove chimney to rear of existing dwelling at 22 Nene Parade, March.
Received: 17 November 2020.
Reply by: 8 December 2020.
Recommend approval.

F/YR20/1088/F

Mr & Mrs Andrew Welbourne, 125 Elm Road, March.
Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling at 125 Elm Road, March,
Received: 25 November 2020.
Reply by: 16 December 2020.
Since she is a friend of the applicants, Councillor Johnson declared a personal interest and took no part in the discussions relating to this application.
Recommend approval.

- F/YR20/1091/F Mr B Love, Norwood Farm Cottage, Elm Road, March.
Erect an agricultural storage building at Land West of Norwood Farm Cottage, Elm Road, March.
Received: 25 November 2020.
Reply by: 16 December 2020.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR20/1094/F Mr & Mrs Wood, 105 Station Road, March.
Alterations to rear roof from cat-slide to mono-pitch at 105 Station Road, March.
Received: 25 November 2020.
Reply by: 16 December 2020.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR20/1103/O Mr Dennis Betts, DR Betts Bespoke Joinery, 43 Whittlesey Road, March.
Erect up to 1 x dwelling (outline application with all matters reserved) at Land South East of 43 Whittlesey Road, March.
Received: 25 November 2020.
Reply by: 16 December 2020.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR20/1106/F Mr David Taylor, Bain & Dahle Partnership, 7 Melbourne Avenue, March.
Siting of a portacabin for use as office/meeting rooms at 7 Melbourne Avenue, March.
Received: 27 November 2020.
Reply by: 18 December 2020.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR20/1110/F Mrs Jo Henson, 86 Elm Road, March.
Erect a part first-floor, part 2-storey and part single-storey rear extension involving demolition of outhouse and removal of chimney to existing dwelling at 86 Elm Road, March.
Received: 26 November 2020.
Reply by: 17 December 2020.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR20/1121/F Mr J Stevens, Old Bank House, 2 West End, March.
Erect a garage/workshop with gym above and an approx. 2.0m high brick/wood wall with wooden gate involving the demolition of existing eastern boundary fence and gate to existing dwelling at Old Bank House, 2 West End, March.
Received: 30 November 2020.
Reply by: 21 December 2020.
Recommend approval.

- F/YR20/1122/LB Mr J Stevens, Old Bank House, 2 West End, March.
External works to curtilage of listed structure including erecting an approx. 2.0m high brick/wood wall with wooden gate and demolishing the existing eastern boundary fence and gate at Old Bank House, 2 West End, March.
Received: 30 November 2020.
Reply by: 21 December 2020.
Recommend approval.
- CCC/20/070/FUL Cambridgeshire County Council.
Change of use of land to create an extension to the existing waste transfer and treatment station; the provision of hard surfaced areas for ancillary storage and processing; a 5.2 metre high storage container wall and landscaping proposals including a 3 metre high bund; and 300mm high retaining wall at Lodge Farm, Knights End Road, March.
Received: 27 November 2020.
Reply by: 18 December 2020.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR20/1138/O Executors of late W Feary, 49 Green Street, March.
Erect up to 6 x dwellings involving upgrade to access (Outline application with all matters reserved) at Land South of 85-89 Upwell Road, March.
Received: 2 December 2020.
Reply by: 23 December 2020.
Recommend approval.
- F/YR20/1169/TRTPO Mr Andy Kimber, 98 Foxglove Way, March.
Works to 4 x Sycamore Trees covered by TPO 3/1967 at 98 Foxglove Way, March.
Received: 2 December 2020.
Reply by: 23 December 2020.
Recommend approval.

117 Public Participation

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

118 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed:

Main Council Meeting of 2nd November 2020.

Planning Sub-Committee Meeting of 16th November 2020.

Unlike the procedure normally adopted whereby the Mayor immediately endorses the minutes, it was agreed that the Clerk should sign the minutes on her behalf.

119 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

120 Budget 2021 / 2022

The Clerk presented the proposals for the 2021 / 2022 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 4th January 2021 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 Jack).

The figures accepted equated to a budget of £292,120 and a precept requirement of £320,000. It was agreed that these figures would be ratified (following amendment if necessary) at the 4th January 2021 meeting.

Full details relating to the budget and precept will be included as an appendix to the 4th January 2021 minutes, at which time all outstanding items will have been finalised.

121 Remembrance Day Events 2021

The Mayor, Councillor Kim French, advised Councillors that new rules brought in by the Royal British Legion Headquarters meant that local branches of the Royal British Legion were no longer allowed to organise the arrangements (including road closures) necessary for future successful Remembrance Day Events.

To overcome these problems, it was suggested that March Town Council should employ Lt Col Nigel Spencer MBE as Remembrance Events Organiser and Mark Wilding as Deputy Remembrance Events Organiser. Neither post would carry a salary but essential out-of-pocket expenses would be reimbursed.

Following discussions, it was unanimously agreed (Proposer Councillor Connor, Seconder Councillor Purser) that both posts should commence from 1st January 2021 and that the Town Clerk should notify them accordingly.

Both posts would be directly answerable to the Mayor and Town Clerk.

It was also agreed that a bottle of port should be gifted to both Messrs. Spencer and Wilding

in recognition of their past efforts.
The Town Clerk would arrange the purchase of the above two bottles, which would then be passed on to Councillor Jack for handover.

122 Museum Lease Extension

The Clerk reported that the Council’s lease with the Museum would expire in 2023 if allowed to run its full course.

He suggested, therefore, that a 21 years extension should be granted at the earliest opportunity. This would ensure that the Museum could plan ahead in the knowledge that their tenancy was secure for the foreseeable future.

The previous 21 years extension was granted in 2002 and, at that time, it was suggested that extensions should be provided when the time remaining dropped to 7 years. We have, obviously, now passed that point so urgent consideration should be given to the request. Following discussions, it was unanimously agreed (Proposer Councillor Purser, Seconder Councillor Jack) to support the extension and the Clerk was instructed to make the necessary legal arrangements to facilitate this.

123 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) Work on the pedestrian crossing in St Peters Road has now been completed.
- b) A pedestrian crossing will also be installed in Station Road in January 2021.
- c) A speed limit is being introduced in Upwell Road.
- d) Investigations are taking place with a view to renovating the Further Education Centre in Station Road.
- e) Assets owned by This Land Limited within March are being marketed in the manner deemed most appropriate for each site.
- f) A Committee has been established to investigate carbon reduction matters and protocols.

124 Fenland District Council Update

Councillor J French reported as follows:

- a) Civil Parking Enforcement investigations are ongoing.
- b) No other specific items to report.

125 Schedule of Accounts

The Schedule of Accounts, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30pm

Councillor K French
Mayor of March.

4th January 2021.