

## MARCH TOWN COUNCIL.

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022 in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

<b>Present</b>	Councillor	K French	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		JW Gowing
	Town Clerk		C Lemmon
	Assistant Town Clerk		SA Taylor
	Public		None

### **148 Apologies**

No apologies were received.

### **149 Presentation by Robin Sutton, Chairman of Neighbourhood Watch**

Robin Sutton highlighted the following points:

- a) This year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Neighbourhood Watch. Nationally it has two million members but the March branch, like many towns, is currently redundant.
- b) Neighbourhood Watch has a new website that offers useful and practical advice to users.
- c) Common sense, burglar alarms, CCTV, good lighting, lockable windows and quality door locks all dramatically reduce the opportunity for theft. Thieves are both professional and mobile and, obviously, prefer “easy” targets which provide less risk of detection.
- d) Crime is currently rising but effective Neighbourhood Watch can assist in alleviating this problem.
- e) Neighbourhood Watch brings groups of people together to assist with issues within their community and, effectively, becomes the “eyes and ears” of that community.
- f) It is important for everyone to be aware of community problems and antisocial behaviour and then report those issues to the police by telephoning 101. The police cannot intervene or assist effectively without local knowledge.

A “question and answer” session ensued during which the following points were raised:

- a) To form a new Neighbourhood Watch group, it is imperative to have good coordinators. It is often recommended doing an initial leaflet drop advising prospective members of the aims of Neighbourhood Watch and providing details of the website.
- b) Thereafter, small neighbourhood groups can be formed and membership is free via the website.

Following his presentation, Robin Sutton was thanked by the Mayor and left the meeting at 7.40pm.

## **150 Police Update**

A written report had been circulated on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022. The next Liaison Meeting is due to be held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

Councillors were again advised to ring 101 if they witnessed anything of concern so that the police were aware of ongoing anti-social/illegal behavioural issues.

## **151 Planning Applications (including Street Naming)**

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 four 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/YR22/0145/F	Mr Mark Crofts, 170 Cavalry Park, March. Erect a single-storey rear extension, a porch and infill extension to front of existing dwelling involving the demolition of existing conservatory at 170 Cavalry Park, March. Received: 23 February 2022. Reply by: 16 March 2022. Recommend approval.
F/YR22/0199/TRTPO	Miss Chelsea Terry, Innovation Group, 4 Linnet Court, Cawledge Business Park, Alnwick. Fell 2 x Ash Trees and 2 x Oak Trees covered by TPO 1/2011 and TPO Land East of 88 West End, March. Received: 21 February 2022. Reply by: 14 March 2022. Recommend approval.
STREET NAMING:	Land South of 135 and 137 Upwell Road, March. (Site Plan available at F/YR19/0931/O). Developer's suggestion: Icen Close. Recommend approval.

- F/YR21/1395/F Mrs Michelle Palmer, Land South of Pear Tree Farm, Cross Road, March.  
Erect 2 x polytunnels and 1 x agricultural storage building at Land South of Pear Tree Farm, Cross Road, March.  
Application withdrawn.  
Received: 3 March 2022.  
Withdrawal noted.
- F/YR22/0197/F Mr Louie Claridge, 18 Burn Street, March.  
Erect a single-storey extension to side/rear of existing dwelling at 18 Burn Street, March.  
Received: 3 March 2022.  
Reply by: 24 March 2022.  
Recommend approval.
- F/YR22/0202/VOC Minster Property Group Ltd and This Land Ltd, c/o Agent, 155 Main Street, Grenoside, Sheffield.  
Variation of condition 25 (list of approved plans) relating to planning permission F/YR19/1064/F (Erect 21 x dwellings [8 x 2-storey 2-bed and 13 x 2-storey 3-bed] involving demolition of former depot buildings including the erection of a 2.4 metre boundary fence adjacent to numbers 1-4 Stevens Way) – amendments to dwelling designs and visitor parking at Former Highways Depot, Queens Street, March.  
Received: 2 March 2022.  
Reply by: 23 March 2022.  
Recommend approval.
- F/YR22/0207/VOC Minster Property Group Ltd and This Land Ltd, c/o Agent, 155 Main Street, Grenoside, Sheffield.  
Removal of condition 3 (potential future access points) and variation of condition 22 (list of approved drawings) relating to planning permission F/YR19/1068/F (Erect 48 x 2-storey dwellings and 2 x single storey dwellings comprising 24 x 2-bed, 21 x 3-bed and 5 x 4-bed with garages to plots 18, 20, 21, 37, 43 and 49 only with attenuation basin and sub-station involving the demolition of existing buildings) – to allow changes to house types / schedule of accommodation at Land North of Maple Grove Infant School, Maple Grove, march.  
Received: 2 March 2022.  
Reply by: 23 March 2022  
Recommend approval.

## 152 Public Participation

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

## **153 Minutes of Meetings**

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:  
Queen's Platinum Jubilee Sub-Committee Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022.  
Main Council Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022.  
Planning Sub-Committee Meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022.  
Christmas Lights Working Party Meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022.  
Personnel & Administrative Sub-Committee Meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

## **154 Matters Arising**

Re Queen's Platinum Jubilee Sub-Committee Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022:

Contact has been made with Mark Turner to design and provide a quotation for a wall-mounted plaque in granite.

Re Main Council Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022:

Minute 141/ Personnel & Admin: Our new Assistant Town Clerk, Mrs Sally Taylor, commenced her employment on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

Re Personnel & Admin Sub-Committee Meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022:

Subject to agreement with her current employers, it is hoped that the incoming Town Clerk will commence her employment on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

Additional Matter Arising:

Pay scales dated back to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 have just been agreed and equate to a rise of approximately 1.75%. The new rates, along with arrears, will be implemented in the March 2022 wage payments which will appear on the schedule of accounts dated 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

## **155 Grants and Donations**

Prior to discussions commencing, the Clerk advised Councillors that £2,205.00p had already been spent during the current financial year under this budget heading. The amount provided within the budget had been £2,000.00p.

Three further applications for funding had been received as follows:

Name: March Library, Cambridgeshire County Council.  
Amount requested: £250 to £500.  
Purpose of grant: To support the Summer Reading Challenge which encourages children to continue reading over the summer holidays by holding events and workshops within the library.

Name: Girl Guiding (4<sup>th</sup> March Brownies).  
Amount requested: Unspecified amount.  
Purpose of grant: To contribute towards the cost of painting their existing storage container, the total cost of which is £955.

Name: March Armed Forces Fair.  
Amount requested: £1,000.  
Purpose of grant: To contribute towards the March Armed Forces Fair that will be held on West End Park on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

All applicants met the general criteria but it was noted that March Library had received some funding in the September 2021 round of applications. As such, their last receipt of funding was within one year of this application and, in accordance with normal rules, further applications should be precluded until September 2022. Discussions ensued as to whether the influence of previous Covid restrictions could be used as a mitigating factor in reaching a final decision in this respect.

Following discussions, the following payments were approved:

March Library: £300.00p to be paid from The Mayors Charity Fund. March Library to be advised that it can apply to March Town Council again with effect from the September 2022 Main Council meeting.  
4<sup>th</sup> March Brownies: £250.00p.  
March Armed Forces Fair: £1,000.00p.

## **156 Nominations for Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2022/23**

Due to activities during 2020/21 and 2021/22 being severely restricted because of the Coronavirus epidemic and subsequent national lockdowns, the current post holders have only experienced, held or attended a minimal number of events.

As such, Councillor Purser proposed and Councillor Connor seconded, with all in favour, that Councillor K French should remain in post for a third term.

Because of Councillor Jack's extended leave of absence, Councillor K French proposed and Councillor White seconded, with all in favour, that Councillor Purser become Deputy Mayor for 2022/23.

Both Councillor K French and Purser stated that they would be honoured to accept and hoped that 2022/23 would see a continuing return to normality and an end to the problems associated with Covid 19.

Since local elections are due to be held in May 2023, it will not be possible to determine the 2023/24 incumbents until the post-election Annual Meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

## **157 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) Station Road has recently been resurfaced.
- b) Full Council Meetings are now only held quarterly.
- c) The 2022/23 budgets have now been finalised but, even though £6.8 million is held in reserves, no funding has been allowed for the general repair of potholes.
- d) The Fire Authority is now used much more often in their role as first responders.
- e) Councillors received more complaints about potholes and the state of footpaths than anything else.

**158 Fenland District Council Update**

Councillor J French reported that:

- a) City Fibre works are progressing well and a finish date is anticipated by the end of June 2022.
- b) The High Street regeneration discussions are ongoing.

**159 Schedule of Accounts**

The Schedule of Accounts, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.15pm

Councillor K French .....4<sup>th</sup> April 2022.  
Mayor of March.