

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of March Town Council held on 8 April 2024 held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm.

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

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Harris.

2 Police Update

No update.

3 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*

It was agreed that no additional planning applications would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

F/YR24/0108/F

Ms Lindsey Wilkie, 59 Elwyn Road, March.

Erect a detached double garage to existing dwelling at 59 Elwyn Road, March.

Revised Proposals; removal of storage area above garage.

Received: 21 March 2024

Reply by: 4 April 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0219/F

Mr G Harradine, 19 The Avenue, March.

Change of use from Education Centre (F1) to 9 dwellings (1 x 3-bed 2-storey, 4 x 2-bed and 4 x 1-bed flats) involving partial demolition of existing building and installation of front boundary fence and gate (1.8m high max) at 34A Station Road, March.

Received: 19 March 2024

Reply by: 9 April 2024

*Cllr Christy declared an interest in this item and took no part in discussions or voting.

Recommendation: Approval - *although the Town Council wishes to know the developer's intention regarding the trees on site.*

F/YR24/0232/O

Mrs Pauline Robertson

Erect up to 3 dwellings (outline application with matters committed of access) involving demolition of existing dwelling and widening of West End at 115B West End March.

Received: 21 March 2024

Reply by: 11 April 2024

Recommendation; Objection – inappropriate development, incongruous to the riverside and character of the area. Concerns regarding light, access and infrastructure.

F/YR24/0238/F

Mr Gordon MacFarlane, 117 Cavalry Drive, March.

Erect a single-storey extension to rear of existing garage to form workshop/office including installation of solar panels at 117 Cavalry Drive, March.

Received: 20 March 2024

Reply: 10 April 2024

Recommendation; Approval

F/YR24/0254/PIP

Mr Brownlow & Ms Davies, Gordon Avenue, March
Permission in Principle to erect up to 9 dwellings at Brownlows
Yard, 400 Creek Road, March.

Received: 27 March 2024

Reply by: 10 April 2024

*Cllr Taylor declared an interest in this item and took no part in
discussions or voting.

Recommendation; Approval

***Comment; The Town Council hopes that a s106 will be
required as per the Neighbourhood Plan, given that the
total number of dwellings to be delivered by the developer
shall exceed ten. Continuing concerns over flooding.**

4 Public Participation

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

5 Minutes of Meetings

The following Minutes were agreed and signed by the Mayor:

Main Meeting – 4 March 2024

Planning Committee – 18 March 2024

Christmas Lights Working Party – 18 March 2024

6 Matters Arising

Main Meeting - 4 March - Minute 176 (Outside Body Membership); Cllr Field advised that a potential new March Education Fund committee member had been identified. Once confirmed, details would be forwarded to the Town Council for approval.

7 Recognition Report

Cllr K French nominated Cllr J French to receive the award of *Honorary Freedom of the Town of March*. Only two such awards have ever been bestowed by the Council.

Cllr J French, 5 times Mayor of March, has tirelessly and selflessly served the town for over 30 years, helping the vulnerable, advocating for the youth and armed forces, running committees to deliver wonderful community events in the town, providing FACT with its first fridge.

All councillors voted in favour of the much-deserved award.

The scroll would be presented in July.

8 St Georges Writing Competition

Whilst the competition was a March Events activity, the writing competition was supported by the Mayor and Town councillors, and, as such, councillors had been asked to judge the entries for the various age groups. Eleven prizes in total would be presented.

9 Cambridgeshire County Council Update

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

- Flooding issues at Sycamore – works at Sycamore Close were now complete. Works at Ellingham Avenue would commence shortly, with Gaul Road forming Phase 3.
- LHI – The Clerk had received the draft feasibility report from CCC regarding Norwood Avenue. The Town Council had accepted the contribution and optimum traffic calming measures identified (speed humps). The next step would be for the application to be heard at the District Member Panel Day on 24 April. Cllr J French stressed the need for all residents to be on board with potential LHI applications.
- Cllr J French advised that a trust had been set up for the new SEN school at Kingswood Park, due to open in 2026/2027.

10 Fenland District Council Update

- Cllr J French advised that FDC had a new interim Head of Planning and the newly appointed Head of Planning would be in post in June/July. Extra planning meetings had been scheduled to tackle the backlog of applications.
- The Broad Street project was currently on schedule. At a meeting of the Steering Group on Friday, it had been announced that there was an underspend that would be available for *capital* expenditure, with any monies to be spent on projects in and around the town centre. A number of projects/enhancements had been mooted. Councillors to forward further suggestions to Cllrs J French and Woollard (members of the Steering Group) for further discussion and a decision in due course.
- The Broad Street Steering Group had also discussed a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially mark the completion of the project and celebrate the opening of the re-vamped town centre. Suggestions for the nature and timing of this event to be forwarded to Cllrs J French and Woollard (as above).
- Cllr Spencer provided councillors with an update on the arrangements for the March Town Council lighting of the beacon to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day on 6 June 2024. Many local businesses were generously providing their services free of charge. The event on West End Park will commence at 1930 and there will be food stalls and a bar, a number of WWII displays and vehicles, musical accompaniment by March Brass, a parade at 2100 followed by the D-Day reading, lighting of the beacon by the Mayor of March and National Anthem. All councillors to attend.

11 Payments List

The Payments List, as circulated, was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:25pm.

Councillor K French22 April 2024
Mayor of March.