

THURLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL
<https://thurlestoneparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

Approved Minutes of Parish Council Meeting on 9th February 2026

Date: 9 th February 2026	Venue & Time: Thurlestone Parish Hall, 19.30 hrs	
Present: Cllr Rosa Lewis (in the Chair) Cllr Gill Stone Cllr Eric Palmer Cllr Nigel Hadaway Cllr David Smyth	In Attendance: SHDC Cllr Sam Dennis Helen Leather (Parish Clerk) Parishioners/guests: 2	Apologies: Cllr Mike Hodges SHDC Cllr Mark Long DCC Cllr Louise Wainright

REPORT IT:

Potholes: Members of the public are requested to report all Highways issues through the Highways Website, enabling faster assessment of problem areas which can then be added to the repair/maintenance schedules. You can report potholes, overgrown vegetation, defective signs/lighting and much more.

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/report-a-pothole/report-a-pothole-form/>



To report: Abandoned Vehicle, Damaged or Full Dog Bin, Damaged/Full Litter Bin, Damaged/Full Recycling Bank, Dead Animal, Dirty Beach, Fly Tipping, Litter/Dog Mess, Planning Breach, Stray Dogs, AND MORE...

<https://www.southhams.gov.uk/report-it>

It takes two minutes to report a problem, please help keep our community beautiful.

108. OPEN FORUM

Two members of the public spoke about the no-parking signage that has been painted on the entrance to Church Farm, next to the Post Office. The signage is garish and an eyesore and spoils the entrance to the church. Cllr Lewis said she would speak to the management company to see if anything could be done.

109. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

DCC Cllr Louise Wainwright. Email: Louise.Wainwright@devon.gov.uk (Apologies sent)

110. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS.

Email Cllr Mark Long: cllr.mark.long@southhams.gov.uk (Apologies sent)

Email Cllr Samantha Dennis: samantha.dennis@swdevon.gov.uk

National Funding Changes

The council received a three-year finance settlement in December, which is unusual but positive in principle. However, the settlement included:

- A Fair Funding Review which disproportionately disadvantages rural councils. The council is among the worst affected nationally.
- A reset of the business rates baseline, reducing the amount the council can retain.
- The ending of the New Homes Bonus scheme.

Business Rates

- Previously, the council could retain a portion of business rates collected above a set baseline.

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- The Government has now reset the baseline, reducing the council's ability to benefit.
- This change is not beneficial for local businesses or the council's finances.
- Combined with other funding changes, the council faces a £2.6 million reduction, equating to a 41% cut.

How Westminster Calculated the Reduction

- Multiple funding pots have been consolidated, but rural-weighting adjustments have been removed, leaving rural councils worse off.
- The removal of rural service recognition and the New Homes Bonus significantly reduces income.
- SHDC believes incorrect calculations were made - Government included last year's growth in council tax revenue, which was inflated by the temporary 200% second-home premium. This level of growth will not repeat, making the assumption unrealistic.
- The council has fed back these concerns and expects clarification next week.

Second Homes and the 200% Premium

- The 200% council tax premium was intended to reduce second-home ownership.
- In practice, second-home numbers in Salcombe have increased.
- Revenue from the premium is being allocated as planned:
 - £500k towards affordable housing.
 - £350k towards temporary accommodation costs, which have risen sharply.

Budget Pressures

- The budget goes to Full Council on Thursday.
- Departments have already tightened spending.
- Concerns were raised about increased reliance on vacancy savings due to lack of recruitment.
- No additional contributions to the repairs and maintenance reserve, despite the council's extensive coastal assets.

Council Tax

- Council tax will rise by 2.99%, the maximum permitted.
- This equates to an increase of £5.88 per year for a Band D property.

Street Cleaning

- The new street-cleaning schedule is nearly complete.
- Routes have been trialled once and are being refined.
- A final version will be shared once the second test run is complete.
- Street cleaners have already been seen operating on the new routes.

Visitor Economy Research

- District councils are partnering with the Business Information Point to research the value, impact, and needs of the local tourism sector.
- A Tourism Symposium will take place on 2 March at Follaton House.
- Alongside the event, there is:
 - An online survey for tourism businesses.
 - Opportunities for one-to-one phone interviews.
- Members were encouraged to share these opportunities with local tourism businesses.

Asset Refurbishment Programme

The council has begun a programme of refurbishing public assets, including:

- Car park resurfacing, public toilet upgrades, replacement or refurbishment of bins, benches, and similar infrastructure. Phase 1 has already taken place in Ivybridge. Phase 2, scheduled for next year, will cover Salcombe, Dartmouth, Kingsbridge, Hope Cove, Slapton
- There may be an opportunity to reprioritise elements of the programme before Phase 2 begins.
- Officers are expected to meet with local towns and parishes during February to discuss priorities, though this meeting still needs to be confirmed and arranged

Local Government Reorganisation

The government has now published their consultation on all the various LGR proposals. It's open until the 26th of March. Parish councils are not a statutory consultee, but they are very welcome and invited to put in their comments, as are members of the public. The consultation can be found at <https://www.devonlgr.co.uk/>

Modbury Parish Council and Change in District Council Position

A recent planning application in Modbury revealed that the District Council has changed its interpretation of how much weight neighbourhood plans carry. Previously, the council had advised that neighbourhood plans less than five years old and with allocated sites would still hold significant weight in planning decisions. This was described as a "generous interpretation" of Paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Why the Position Has Changed

Three developments have forced the District Council to revise its stance:

1. Legal Opinion - A leading counsel's opinion, submitted with the Modbury application, argued that the council had misapplied Paragraph 14. The District Council's own legal advice confirmed this.
2. Planning Inspector Decisions. Recent appeal decisions show that inspectors are consistently applying a stricter interpretation, aligning with the legal opinion.
3. High Court Judgment. A High Court ruling at the end of last year confirmed the same interpretation.

Consequences for Neighbourhood Plans

Even though the Modbury Neighbourhood Plan was less than five years old, it did not allocate enough sites to meet the higher housing numbers now required. As a result, the plan cannot be given the weight previously assumed. This is disappointing and concerning for all parishes with neighbourhood plans, as many may now be considered out-of-date or insufficient.

Next Steps

SHDC Cllr Long has requested that the District Council provide:

- A written briefing note explaining the new position.
- Virtual briefings for all affected parishes, towns, and neighbourhood-plan groups.
- These sessions are expected to take place within the next couple of weeks.

111. APOLOGIES

DCC Cllr Wainwright, SHDC Cllr Long and Cllr Hodges.

112. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th January 2026 were approved and signed and initialled by the Chair.

113. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

114. CLERKS REPORT

DCC Cllr Wainwright has just set up a Salcombe Division Road Warden WhatsApp. This is not a public group. It is designed to provide peer support to official Road Wardens or an appointed Cllr from the parish council and enables Road Wardens to organise to share full pallets of cold tar and organise local training to improve the longevity of their pothole repairs. The P3 Footpaths survey forms have been completed for DCC. Paul Martin has kindly offered to do survey of the Pump House in Thurlestone and submit his recommendations for repairs.

115. COUNCILLOR REPORTS ON AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED –

A. Footpaths Update – Cllr Smyth.

- Dixon's Quay. The path order has been signed by all parties. Waiting for Devon County Council to seal the order and issue original copies to all parties. Once sealed, a copy will also be provided to the parish council.
- Repairs are underway on Path 3 following the collapse of the path by the Golf Course. Ros Davies and the Golf Club had been very proactive, the pipe is being replaced and then the path will be rebuilt over it. Repairs to signs on Path 13 will hopefully be completed soon.

B. Highways update.

- There is flooding at West Buckland caused by a blocked bridge on privately owned land, but the landowner is currently unreachable and unable to authorise the necessary clearance work. Until someone with authority for the property can be identified and contacted, the council cannot intervene because the responsibility lies with the landowner.
- The pothole in Bantham was repaired, but has already worn away. Cllr Hadaway has reported to DCC about poor quality of the patch up.
- The Bantham road was recently blocked by a badly parked van, and emergency vehicles would not have been able to pass. A solution may be to put yellow lines along any stretch of the road that is not wide enough for two vehicles to pass.

C. VAS signs.

Need to purchase two poles for the signs which Cllr Hadaway is investigating.

D. Planning and Neighbourhood Plan

A cement-mixing operation has begun at the RT Industries site at A.G. Bridge without the required Environmental Health licence, raising serious concerns. Local residents have reported cement dust entering their homes, and there is evidence of run-off entering the river, posing risks to water quality, wildlife, and the wider estuary used for recreation. The site is in a highly sensitive environmental area, and cement production should not be carried out in the open. Although the business claims financial pressure, this does not justify operating without proper controls. A stop notice is understood to be in place, and further clarification is being sought from officers.

116. PLANNING & ENFORCEMENT (RESPONSE DATES NOTED)

Full details of all applications and Thurlestone Parish responses please visit the South Hams District Council planning portal at:

<https://southhams.planning-register.co.uk/Disclaimer?returnUrl=%2F>

No planning applications this month.

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SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL DECISIONS:

- **3263/25/VAR – Onnalea, Bantham, TQ7 3AR. Approved**
- **3526/25/HHO - 5 Parkfield, Thurlestone, TQ7 3NW. Approved.**
- **3608/25/HHO - Kinnasea, 25 Eddystone Road, Thurlestone, TQ7 3NU. Approved**
- **3668/25/HHO - 6 Lambs Close, Thurlestone, TQ7 3PF. Under Consideration**
- **2915/25/HHO - 3A Landpath, Thurlestone, TQ7 3PE. Approved**
- **3290/25/HHO – Albemar, Ilbert Road, Thurlestone, TQ7 3NY. Approved**
- **3062/25/HHO – Sunnybank, Ilbert Road, Thurlestone, TQ7 3NY. Approved.**

117. FINANCE & GOVERNANCE Receipts & Payments – Month 9

Accounts to pay – It was agreed to pay/approve – Parish Hall Hire. Clerk’s salary. Julian Lee hours for January. Defibrillator Replacement Pads £168.00.

118. NEXT MEETINGS

- **Monday, 2nd March 2026, 7.30 pm**
- **Monday, 13th April 2026, 7.30 pm (please note this change of date due to Bank Holiday)**
- **Monday, 11th May 2026, 7.30 pm (please note this change of date due to Bank Holiday)**

119. THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.15 PM

Signed as a true record:

Print Name: Date:

Agenda Items and Updates; where possible please submit to the Clerk one week prior to the meeting to ensure time for inclusion, circulation, and study. If a Council Member is unable to attend a meeting it would be appreciated if they could submit a brief précis of progress on their actions, if applicable, (to the Clerk for distribution) together with their apologies.

Distribution List: Thurlestone Parish Councillors. For Information to: County Cllr L Wainright, South Hams District Council Salcombe & Thurlestone Ward Councillors, Thurlestone Parish Website: <https://thurlestoneparishcouncil.gov.uk/>