

DEAN PRIOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting Held on

Monday 2nd February 2026 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall in Dean Prior

Present – Cllrs Bailey (Chair) , Caygill , Rutley , Smerdon and Thorn
and the Clerk , Karen Gilbert.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - NONE

SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL - FULL REPORT AVAILABLE FROM CLERK

Upcoming Consultations and Engagement Activity

February - Parking Permit Review: statutory consultation required by legislation to consult on the changes to parking permits.

February & March – LGR: Government run consultation on Local Government Reorganisation proposal(s) for Devon. Expected to start mid February and will run for 7 weeks.

TBC March - Local Plan: Engaging with statutory consultees to formally announce our intention to start a new local plan followed by a 6 to 8 weeks engagement process. Waiting for Government information.

Government cuts funding for SHDC

The Government's "Fair" Funding Review has seen the Council fall into the category of being the worse impacted in the country, where only 95% of the Council's previous levels of funding have been guaranteed by the Government in 2027/28 and 2028/29. This is a reduction in Government funding of £2.671m in 28/29 for example – a 41% reduction. The final Finance Settlement will be laid in Parliament in early February 2026. The Council is currently forecasting a £2.65m budget gap by the following year, 2027/28. The cumulative aggregated Budget Gap by 2028/29 is £6.96m, if no action has been taken in each individual year to close the budget gap annually.

Storm response

Our teams have been working with the resilience forum working in partnership in response to the most recent storms across Slapton, Torcross and Beesands. Strong winds and waves affected several locations, with surface erosion at the Memorial car park in Slapton and storm damage to Torcross toilet block and car park.

Strete Gate toilets have remained open throughout and Torcross Tank toilets were reopened on Thursday following electrical and drainage checks carried out by our property service teams, and a deep cleaned required by our cleansing team. Roof repairs will need to be carried out at Torcross Tank toilets in due course. Our waste and street cleansing team have also provided assistance to the residents with tackling the clear up.

DNPA - Full report available from Clerk

NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Following our recent assessment process, I am pleased to confirm that we have appointed Tom Surrey as our next Chief Executive.

Tom is joining us from the Department of Health and Social Care, where he has served as Director of Adult Social Care Workforce and Policy for the past five years. Previously, Tom led the delivery of policy, strategy and legislation for National Parks, Forestry, Common Land and

Rights of Way at DEFRA as well as spells in Housing, Local Government and the Cabinet Office. Tom has strong ties to Dartmoor with family members living in the area.

Tom will take up his new position from Wednesday 18 March 2026.

We thank Kevin Bishop for his 18 years of dedicated service as CEO of DNPA and wish him all the best for the future

DEVON COUNTY

Cllr Thomas explained the process surrounding the Local Government Re-organisation and advised that every household will be receiving a leaflet showing all the proposals put forward to the Government for consideration

A Public consultation will commence on 5th February and last for seven weeks

Cllr Thomas and the Parish Council - hope that the Parishioners will take part

CLLR THOMAS LEFT THE MEETING

26/02/01 Apologies for absence - None

26/02/02 Approval of Minutes To consider, amend as agreed by the Council (if required) & approve the Minutes of Parish Council meeting held 1st December 2025 **APPROVED**

26/02/03 Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Smerdon - Planning - as DNPA member (standing Interest)

26/02/04 Parish Council admin

a) Arrangements for new website

The Clerk had circulated the first draft for comment

Councillors considered that the home background photo - taken from the existing website was a little dreary

ACTION ; CLLR TO TAKE MORE APPROPRIATE IMAGES

b) To agree the date of the April PC meeting and Annual Parish meeting (suggested 13/4)

It was **NOTED** that the first Monday in April fell on Easter Monday

Cllr Rutley advised that the Hall was booked on 13th April - the first suggestion

It was **RESOLVED** that the April meeting - and the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on 8th April 2026 at 7pm

c) To discuss arrangements for a Memorial bench

Dean Forge had kindly **AGREED** to supply a bench for the Memorial dedicated to the late Michael Chew

It was **AGREED** that Cllrs should form a plan for the green area where the bench would sit

ACTION ; COUNCILLORS TO PREPARE A PLAN FOR REMOVAL OF TREE / CREATION OF HARD STANDING PRIOR TO PLACING OF BENCH

26/02/05 Clerks Report

The Clerk reminded the Council that , although it was not a statutory consultee for the LGR consultation , there was nothing preventing the Council from commenting

ACTION ; AGENDA ITEM FOR 03/26

26/02/06 Planning

0023/26	Well Park Farm, Dean Prior, Buckfastleigh, Devon, TQ11 0LY	Erection of roofing over existing silage pits with cladding on selected elevations
NO OBJECTION		

Cllr Smerdon (and Cllr Pannell) took no part in debate

0257/25 <u>ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS ONLINE</u> <u>RE-CONSULTING</u>	Land At Timbers Road, Buckfastleigh, Devon,	Outline planning permission (with all matters reserved apart from access) for the phased development of circa 75 dwellings, highway improvements to Timbers Road and associated infrastructure
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The Council noted the additional information

It was **RESOLVED** that no further comment was required

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk write to DNPA to confirm that its previous comments still stood

26/02/07 – FINANCE

a) Approval of cheques APPROVED

Karen Gilbert	Expenses 12/25 and 01/26	£93.25
SLCC	Contribution to annual subs (whole = £253)	£50.00

26/02/08 Highway matters

Cllr Bailey commented on the poor standard to vegetation cutting along the slip road at Drybridge

ACTION ; CLERK TO CONTACT NATIONAL HIGHWAYS

Councillors discussed the ditches , drainage and erosion of the side of the highway on the road from the Village Hall to the stone bridge

ACTION ; CLERK TO CONTACT DCC HIGHWAYS

26/02/09 - Correspondence - - Nothing of note

26/02/10 Councillors business for next agenda. LGR response / Bench

26/02/11 Date/time of next meeting. 2nd March 2026 at 7pm

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.15pm .