

The Minutes of the Meeting of Thurnham Parish Council
held on 9th February 2026 at the Tudor Park Hotel, at 7:30pm.

*Councillors present: Duncan
Shelley
Skinner
Waters
Wise*

Also: Sherrie Babington (Parish Clerk), and members of the public.

The meeting was Chaired by Cllr Skinner.

1. Apologies.

Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.

Apologies were received and accepted from:

- *Cllr Dunlop – Personal*
- *Cllr Stark – Personal*
- *Cllr Smith – Holiday*

Apologies were also received from Ward Councillor Stephen Thompson.

2. Parish Councillor Vacancy.

To consider any applications for Co-option.

No applications were received.

3. Declaration of Interests.

To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers.

No declarations of interest were made.

To consider any Dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

No dispensation requests were considered.

4. Minutes from last Parish Council Meeting.

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting and if in order sign as a true record.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2026 were circulated to all members.

Proposed: Cllr Wise

Seconded: Cllr Duncan

RESOLVED: Minutes approved.

The Minutes were then signed and dated by the Chairman of the meeting.

5. **Matters arising from the Minutes.**

There were no matters arising.

6. **Public Participation.**

No matters were raised.

7. **Clerk's Report.**

The Clerk's report was received and noted.

Parish Council Website.

Cllr Duncan raised concerns that the council website currently does not have an SSL security certificate, which can result in browsers displaying warnings that the site may not be secure.

The Clerk reported that following discussions with HugoFox, it had been confirmed that an SSL certificate can be installed if the parish council transfers hosting of its domain to HugoFox.

The domain itself would remain unchanged, however HugoFox would host the domain which would allow them to install and maintain the SSL certificate as part of the existing website package.

The Clerk also advised that councils will increasingly be expected to operate using a .gov.uk domain as part of future audit and governance requirements.

Moving the website hosting arrangement will allow the parish council to begin transitioning to the .gov.uk domain structure, helping the council prepare for Assertion 10 compliance within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

Parish Council Email Addresses

Members discussed the potential introduction of .gov.uk email addresses for councillors.

While not currently a statutory requirement, it was noted that this is increasingly considered best practice to ensure secure communications and compliance with data protection requirements.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk progress with the changes to the website and establish further details regarding councillor email addresses.

8. **External Reports.**

a. To receive the MBC Ward Councillor's Report.

Apologies and a written report was received and noted from Cllr Thompson.

The Chairman reported that Ward Councillor Stephen Thompson had submitted a written report, this referred to ongoing Maidstone Borough Council consultations, including strategic planning consultations relating to development sites such as Lidsing and Lenham Heath.

Members discussed whether the Parish Council should submit responses to consultations that do not directly affect Thurnham Parish.

Historically the council has generally chosen not to respond to consultations that fall outside the parish boundary unless a clear impact on the parish can be demonstrated.

Members therefore agreed that, in this instance, the Parish Council did not wish to submit any additional comments.

b. To receive the KCC Councillor's Report.

No apologies or reports were received.

c. To receive the Police Report.

No report submitted.

d. To receive Parish Councillors Reports.

No matters were reported.

9. St Mary's Church.

To receive a report on St Marys Church.

The Clerk reported that St Mary's Church was planning to organise a car show later this year.

10. Financial Matters.

a. Financial Statement.

To receive and approve the financial statement and payments.

The financial statement was circulated.

Members raised no queries and approved the Financial Statement.

Proposed: Cllr Shelley

Seconded: Cllr Waters

RESOLVED: Approved.

11. Planning Matters.

a. Planning Applications Received

No applications to consider.

b. MBC Planning Decisions.

25/504766/FULL

Lysander 3 Ace High Close Thurnham Kent ME14 3ND

Removal of existing shed and erection of a new garage / studio.

Application Permitted

c. Other Planning Matters.

Members were advised that an appeal had been lodged with the Planning Inspectorate relating to the proposed Traveller site at Longton Manor (A249).

The appeal will be determined by informal hearing.

Members confirmed that the Parish Council maintains its standing objection to the proposal, reflecting the position previously submitted during the planning consultation.

12. Highway & PROW Matters.

a. To consider general highway and PROW matters.

Members discussed the issue raised by residents at the previous meeting regarding vehicle speeds on Caring Lane.

It was noted that the majority of the affected stretch of road falls within Leeds Parish, although a small section lies within Thurnham.

Leeds Parish Council has indicated that it intends to include the matter within its Highways Improvement Plan (HIP).

Members agreed that it would be sensible to await the outcome of Leeds Parish Council's discussions with Kent County Council Highways before deciding whether Thurnham Parish Council should take any additional action.

b. HIP (Highways Improvement Plan).

To receive an update on the Highways Improvement Plan.

Cllr Smith reported on this item.

13. Heritage Award.

Members considered the refurbishment of the Thurnham Heritage Award.

The Clerk advised that the Heritage Award design proof is currently awaited from the supplier.

Once received, the proof will be circulated to members for confirmation prior to production.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk finalise the wording and proceed with ordering the plaque.

Action: Clerk to place order for new plaque.

14. Future Agenda Items.

There were no future items.

15. Date of next Meeting.

Monday 16th March 2026.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed to the press and public at 8.05pm.

Signed:

Date: