

Councillor Louise Wainwright February 2026 report

1. Full Council Report

DCC full council meeting reported a balanced budget so avoiding special measures where the national government intervenes and sells off assets without consultation with DCC. This was achieved through efficiencies and cost savings. It was possible to add £ 11 million into reserves however these precariously low at £100 million in comparison to an overall budget of £2 billion. The low level of reserves is of concern to the DCC leader as this might result in bankruptcy. The national grant for the next three years is misrepresented as “additional funding” but this barely keeps up with inflation and includes reference to council tax rises at 4.99% and assumes our 100% collection rate.

2. Highways budget

The highways budget remains drastically inadequate and less than 72% of the national government grant of 2011. However, DCC are able to allocate an extra £ 11 million in capital and £ 4 million in revenues into the highways budget. The £ 4 million revenue that is going into the highways budget will go into the repairs and maintenance section and this includes the road warden scheme.

3. Road Wardens Scheme

I am proactively promoting the Road Warden scheme across Devon and I'm forging local links with Road Warden groups outside the salcombe division. This is to share good practise. I have set up a Salcombe Division Road Wardens WhatsApp group and this is linked to the parish councils that have completed the first round of parish priority lists of highways work. A group of 10 Road Wardens from different parishes met recently and discussed the various issues relating to pothole repair.

4. YouTube Channel on Highways issues

I have created a YouTube channel that will be published soon that will share practical tutorials and tips designed for Road Wardens regarding highways issues including best practice regarding pothole repair.

5. Handbook.

I am preparing a handbook on *highways for parish councils* partnering with DCC, This has been fully supported by Rob Richards Deputy Director of Highways and Councillor Dan Thomas cabinet minister for highways. This will include an enhanced Road Warden scheme which will include co funding more substantial road works.

6. Neighbourhood Area Committees

There will be a Salcombe division assembly on **Saturday 28th of March** between 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM at the Modbury Queen Elizabeth II hall to discuss the new neighbourhood area committees.

7. Gas Emergency

There was a debriefing meeting on 6th March for all stakeholders after the gas emergency. This included speakers from Wales and West utilities, Local Resilience Forum, Devon Communities Together, South Hams District Council, parish and town councillors and an assistant to Caroline Voaden MP. Devon Communities Together invited applications for 100 community hub packs that are available on a first come first served basis. More details on their website for applying.

Parish and Town councils were encouraged to either update or prepare for the first time their emergency plans.