

# **HEATHFIELD AND WALDRON** **ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY**

**Monday 13 April 2026, 7pm**  
**Heathfield Community Centre**

**PRESENT:** Parish Councillors: Attry, Blakey, Coffey, Cole, Deacon, Hird, Hough, Leney, Mayfield, Mian, Rivers, Snook (Chair) and Stedman

Also present: ESCC Cllr Bennett and WDC Cllr Gadd. ESCC Cllrs Cross and Bowdler were present for part of the meeting.

Representatives of the following organisations had stands at the event:

Wealden Volunteering, Age Concern and Men's Shed, Churches Together, U3A, Heathfield and District Bonfire Society, Millennium Green, Wealden Works, Mankind and Twinning Association and Le Marche.

The Clerk was in attendance.

Approximately 54 members of the public were present.

26/01 Welcome by the Chair

The Chair, Cllr Gill Snook, welcomed everyone and introduced the Chairs of the Parish Council Committees

26/02 Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Parish Councillors Thomas, Dunstall and Draper, ESCC Councillors Cross and Bowdler (for part of the meeting) and Chris Dowling, WDC Councillor Newton and Nus Ghani MP.

26/03 Approval of the minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly for 2025

The minutes of the 2025 Annual Parish Assembly were approved and were signed by the Chair.

26/04 Annual report by the Chair of the Council – Councillor Gill Snook

The Chair gave her report on the role of the Parish Council, on their achievements, the work of the Wealden Larger Parish Forum, the Parish Council's new strategic plan and the items the Parish Council are continuing to work on.

26/05 Reports from Committee Chairs of what their committee have been working on throughout the year:

a. Finance and General Purposes Committee - Cllr Mark Deacon;

Cllr Deacon spoke on the grants that have been given, the general expenditure and the precept increase.

b. Leisure, Amenities and Burials Committee – Cllr John Rivers;

Cllr Rivers spoke on the Committee's responsibilities, the budget breakdown and their achievements in 2025/26. He thanked Chris Davis at Agrifactors for his hard work and willingness to assist. He also thanked volunteers who help to improve the area.

c. Planning and Highways Committee – Cllr Patrick Coffey;

Cllr Coffey spoke on the work the committee do and what they have achieved in the last 12 months and the challenges they have faced.

d. Community, Business and Development Committee - Cllr Mark Deacon

Cllr Deacon spoke on the committee's responsibilities, what they have achieved in 2025/26, the committee's budget and looking ahead to the future.

26/06 Looking ahead

Cllr Snook spoke on events in the future. She advised that the Council currently have some Councillor vacancies and encouraged attendees to speak to the Clerk or Councillors regarding these.

26/07 Opportunity for members of the public to ask questions of their Parish Council and to raise any matters of concern relating to the Parish.

A member of the public raised about a planning application appeal for a property in the High Street. Cllr Coffey responded.

A member of the public raised about ESCC approval of licences for roadworks and signage regarding road closures. The Parish Council will raise at their liaison meeting with ESCC Highways. They will also raise about rolling roadblocks, where there is no indication how long they will last.

A member of the public asked for the Parish Council's view on the provision of housing for young people. Cllr Coffey confirmed that the Planning and Highways committee push for suitable housing at new developments.

A member of the public advised that the precept is very good value and raised about the 8.5% increase in the Parish Council precept and whether they have exhausted their reserves. The Chair confirmed that this is a reduction in the previous year's % increase, that we don't receive any government funding, that we seriously considered how much to increase the precept by in order to continue provide all our services and that for audit requirements we need to keep 50% of the precept in reserves.

A member of the public complimented on the wildflower areas and asked that these be increased.

A member of the public commented on the 'magnificent' facilities at the youth hub, they asked what a pumptrack is, to which the Chair responded.

A member of the public asked where the permanent site is for the cinema and that they have heard that a gym is going in where the Factory Shop was. It was confirmed that the Parish Council don't know where the permanent site is. Attendance at screenings, fundraising and that it is a 'not for profit' organisation were raised. Cllr Coffey responded regarding the gym, a member of the public expressed concern over parking for the gym.

A member of the public raised about the bus service and that football has gone down in the town and people don't attend events as the buses are unreliable. The Clerk will raise this with ESCC.

Cllr Mike Gadd (WDC) advised that the Parish Council support him and residents well, he spoke about the WDC members' grants.

A member of the public spoke about trees works, grass cutting and other Maintenance works. Cllr Rivers spoke on the tendering process and the Grounds Maintenance contract.

A member of the public raised about a problem with a trough at the allotments, Cllr Rivers will raise this with the Grounds Maintenance contractor.

A member of the public thanked the Parish Council and their staff for the work they do.

The Chair of the Council asked for a show of hands for each member of staff.

The meeting closed at 8:20pm