

9 April 2018

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY, HOUSING AND PLANNING** will be held in the **Council Chamber** at these offices on **Tuesday 17 April 2018 at 7.00 p.m.**, when your attendance is requested.

Yours sincerely,

KATHRYN HALL

Chief Executive

### **A G E N D A**

	<b>Pages</b>
1. To note Substitutes in Accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4 - Substitutes at Meetings of Committees etc.	
2. To receive apologies for absence.	
3. To receive Declarations of Interest from Members in respect of any matter on the Agenda.	
4. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for Community, Housing and Planning held on 21 March 2018.	<b>3 - 8</b>
5. To consider any items that the Chairman agrees to take as urgent business.	
6. National Planning Policy Framework: Consultation Document.	<b>9 – 18</b>
7. Equality and Diversity Progress Report 2017.	<b>19 – 33</b>
8. Questions pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 10 due notice of which has been given.	

To: **Members of Scrutiny Committee for Community, Housing and Planning** – Councillors Barrett-Miles, E. Belsey, Cherry, Coote, de Mierre, Forbes, Hatton, C. Hersey, M. Hersey (Vice-Chairman), A Jones, Matthews, Walker (Chairman), Watts Williams, Wilkinson, Wyan.



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for  
Community, Housing and Planning held on 21 March 2018  
from 7:00 p.m. to 8:43 p.m.**

**Present:** Councillors: Neville Walker (Chairman)  
Margaret Hersey (Vice-Chairman)

Andrew Barrett-Miles\*  
Edward Belsey\*  
Richard Cherry  
Phillip Coote  
Ruth de Mierre

Bruce Forbes  
Sue Hatton  
Chris Hersey  
Anne Jones  
Edward Matthews\*

Anthony Watts Williams\*  
John Wilkinson  
Peter Wyan

\*Absent

**Also Present (Cabinet Members):** Cllr Andrew MacNaughton and Cllr Norman Webster.

**Also Present (Members):** None.

**1. SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEE - COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 4**

Councillor Holden was substituting for Councillor Watts Williams and Councillor Moore was substituting for Councillor Barrett-Miles.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Matthews, Councillor Watts Williams, Councillor Barrett-Miles and Councillor Edward Belsey.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Holden declared a personal interest in item 8 as he was currently participating in the Mid Sussex Wellbeing Service Weight Off course.

**4. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Committee held on 17 January 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**5. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT BUSINESS.**

None.

**6. DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONTRIBUTIONS, AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND VIABILITY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS.**

Lois Partridge, Business Unit Leader for Planning Policy and Economy introduced the report which asked the Committee to consider three draft Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) intended to replace the adopted Developer and Infrastructure SPD, which was adopted in 2006. The Committee was asked to recommend that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning approves the three documents as suitable for public consultation. She explained the key issues in the revised Development and Infrastructure

SPD and the Development Viability SPD which were contained in the report. Emma Shuttleworth, Business Unit Leader for Housing Enabling introduced the Affordable Housing SPD and its key issues which were also contained in the report.

The Business Unit Leader for Planning Policy and Economy informed the Committee that the SPD needed to be updated so it would be kept in line with the policies of the newly adopted District Plan. She also confirmed to the Committee that the public consultation would commence on 9 April 2018 for 6 weeks and finishes on 21 May 2018.

A Member noted that the report states that the minimum indicative standard of car parking provision expected in Hotels, Motels and Guest Houses is based on the WSCC car parking standards at one space per bedroom. A development in East Grinstead was approved that provided no car parking provision the Member sought clarity on this issue.

The Business Unit Leader for Planning Policy and Economy clarified to the Member that MSDC would always defer to WSCC as the principal Highways authority on any parking matters.

A Member queried how the Council could require housing schemes to make effective use of land and not deliberately sub-divide sites to avoid making affordable housing contributions.

The Business Unit Leader for Housing Services confirmed that this would be done on a case by case basis and the SPD provides a tool for Officers and Members to challenge developers on aspects like effective use of land, and provision of affordable housing.

Members commented that the separation of the three SPDs made them clear and concise.

The Business Unit Leader for Planning Policy and Economy explained that the figures included in the report had been reached as a result of consultation with the appropriate Officers. A Member asked the Chairman whether he was happy with the figures contained in the report. The Officers and the Chairman confirmed they were confident that they were accurate. Developers would be encouraged to view the figures on the planning website.

A Member asked whether there was a way for the Council to make developers provide affordable units before market price units.

The Business Unit Leader for Housing Services told the Committee that there were clauses in the Section 106 agreements that meant affordable housing is built alongside market priced properties and that they are delivered in a timely fashion.

A Member queried whether the Affordable Housing SPD has provisions to stop affordable housing sites being withdrawn and not replaced. She also wanted to know how the Council are planning on ensuring housing provisions for older people. She highlighted an issue in Hassocks of private residents in blocks of flats not being able to afford building costs that for housing association residents are covered by the housing association.

Regarding the issue in Hassocks the Business Unit Leader for Housing Services informed the Committee that in this instance on ex right to buy units it is the owner's responsibility to check their lease and the Council cannot intervene. The Solicitor to the Council confirmed that the District Council would not be able to get involved and the private residents should have been advised by the leaseholders when purchasing the properties.

The Business Unit Leader for Housing Services explained that affordable housing sites can be redeveloped due to the scheme no longer being fit for purpose but an aim of the SPD is to replace any lost affordable housing with other equivalent affordable units. Regarding provisions for older people the Council already works with specialised providers to provide appropriate units.

A Member raised her concern over planning obligations that can be collected to fund a specific infrastructure project or type of infrastructure being limited to no more than five contributions. She was concerned that there would not be enough developments to be able to fund the infrastructure work needed if they were restricted to no more than five.

The Business Unit Leader for Planning Policy and Economy informed the Member that the pooling limit did not apply to section 278 contributions.

The Business Unit Leader for Housing Services explained to Members that the monies retained by housing associations when shared owners buy additional shares would be reinvested in affordable housing. This reinvestment would be a recycled capital grant however it would not be ring-fenced to Mid Sussex and could be used to provide affordable housing elsewhere. These are rules set by Homes England, if it were a grant supplied by Mid Sussex then in the grant agreement it would specify that the affordable housing would have to be re-supplied into the district.

The Business Unit Leader for Planning Policy and Economy told Members that the purpose of the SPDs was to elaborate on the policies in the District Plan and provide context and a framework. The Solicitor to the Council confirmed that policies carry more weight than the key issues in SPDs.

A Member queried whether there was a minimum standard for the quality of affordable housing. The Business Unit Leader for Housing Enabling informed the Committee that the quality of affordable housing was controlled by the building regulations. Housing associations have their own standards and they seek to only acquire the properties that are built to the same quality as private properties. She also told the Committee that a concealed household relates to properties where for example a young adult is residing with their parents. Affordable housing units are given a discounted rate for section 106 contributions to reflect the fact that generally people who are housed in these units already use local services such as Education.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning noted that the SPDs had not been scrutinised by the Committee before and he was pleased to see that the report had now come before the Committee. He wanted to thank the work that Officers had put in to create these SPDs.

The Chairman then noted that no more Members wished to speak so moved to the recommendation, which was agreed unanimously.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Committee;

- i) Consider the three Development and Infrastructure, Viability and Affordable Housing SPD documents; and
- ii) Recommends that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning approves the three documents as suitable for public consultation.

## **7. MID SUSSEX PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT.**

Natasha Allen, the Partnerships Manager, introduced the report which sought to inform Members of the Mid Sussex Partnership's progress. Members were asked to consider the report and endorse the inclusion of the work enablement update within the annual MSP report for the next financial year.

A Member commented that no Councillors were members of the Strategic Joint Action Group and that she believed the group would gain value if there was representation.

The Partnerships Manager noted that this could feed in to the current review of the MSP. .

The Cabinet Member for Community noted that the report showed the amount of work MSDC does with external organisations and that they are an active member in the community. He told the Committee that the Police Commissioner was reviewing her funding all over the County to provide fair funding.

The Chairman noted that no more Members wished to speak so moved to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

### **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- (i) Considers the report;
- (ii) Endorses inclusion of the work enablement update within the annual MSP report for the next financial year.

## **8. MID SUSSEX WELLBEING SERVICE**

Paul Turner, the Wellbeing Manager, introduced the report which aimed to update Members on the Mid Sussex Wellbeing Service. The Service is performing well and meeting its targets. The Council has received a 5.6% reduction in funding which follows the 8% reduction in the previous financial year. The report set out the services that were delivered in 2017/18 and outlines proposals for 2018/19.

A Member queried how the Council could get more General Practices to work with the Wellbeing team.

The Wellbeing Manager stated that the Council only wants to get involved with GPs in areas where they can add value. The team can't be available at every surgery but they do help advise Care Coordinators in surgeries across the District.

A Member wanted it noted that he knew first-hand how effective the programs run by the Wellbeing team were. He queried whether a program for Members could be introduced. He also believed that getting the Clinical Commissioning Groups from across the District would help the program immensely.

The Wellbeing Manager informed Members that the team attend many events in the District that are run by different wellbeing organisations. He asked if Members know of any they should inform the Wellbeing team.

A Member queried whether it was just a cautionary note that the Council could incur redundancy costs of £41,000 in 2018/19 if WSCC decide to serve notice on the current partnership agreement funding for the Wellbeing Service.

The Wellbeing Manager informed him that it was a cautionary note however it was also a possibility.

A Member noted that it was unfortunate that the costs of the service could not be directly balanced against the benefits that it offers to the community.

The Wellbeing Manager told the Committee that Public Health would be researching information on using return on investment to fund the Wellbeing Service. He also confirmed to Members that the budget from the cancelled Back to Exercise – Albion in the Community course had been reinvested into other wellbeing courses. He informed the Committee that the Wellbeing team don't undertake primary care but do advocate services and events that do.

The Head of Corporate Resources told Members that they were cognisant that Members would like to see more of the budget allocated to support the Service.

The Cabinet Member for Community thanked Members for their comments and advocacy of the Service. He noted the proactive measures that the team are making to reduce social isolation and reminded Members that the team only get involved when they can add value and help. He informed the Committee that 40% of referrals come from GPs and that the cancellation of the Exercise – Albion in the Community course shows that they are prepared to stop a program if it isn't performing as expected.

The Chairman noted that no more Members wished to speak so moved to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- i) Consider and endorses the proposed approach for the continued delivery of the wellbeing service for 2018/19.

## **9. WORK ENABLEMENT (MID SUSSEX NEETs MENTORING PROJECT) UPDATE**

Natasha Allen, the Partnerships Manager, introduced the report which provides Members with an update on the 'Work Enablement' Project, which is the commissioned Mid Sussex NEETs Mentoring Project, named Positive Placements for those not in education, employment, or training, (NEETs). She told the Committee that performance had been good overall, with the project on track or close to delivering against key performance targets.

A Member asked whether they were still being supplied with inaccurate NEET figures. The Member also asked how the Service was managed.

The Partnerships Manager confirmed that they were now receiving accurate information. She also informed the Committee that there are quarterly performance meetings with YMCA and requested that Members contact her if they have issues that they want to be raised.

The Cabinet Member for Community told the Committee that the YMCA were shortlisted for an award for their work in the community and that Officers do monitor the performance of organisations that MSDC work with.

The Chairman noted that no more Members wished to speak so moved to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

**RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- i) Consider the progress report;
- ii) Endorses that future reporting of this project be incorporated into the Mid Sussex Partnership Annual Report and for it not to be considered as a separate report.

**10. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY, HOUSING AND PLANNING WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18**

Tom Clark, the Solicitor to the Council, introduced the work programme to the Committee. He told Members that the additional meeting was to inform Members of the Council's response to the Government consultation on the NPPF and its supporting documents and to update Members on the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme.

The Chairman moved to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

**RESOLVED**

The Committee agreed the current work programme.

Chairman



## 6. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK: CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

REPORT OF: DIVISIONAL LEADER FOR PLANNING AND ECONOMY  
Contact Officer: Sally Blomfield  
Email: sally.blomfield@midsussex.gov.uk Tel: 01444 477435  
Wards Affected: All  
Key Decision: Yes  
Report to: Scrutiny Committee for Community, Housing and Planning  
Date of meeting: 17 April 2018

---

### Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to set out the key changes proposed by Government in the consultation draft of the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) and associated documents (set out in Appendix 1) and the Council's proposed response for consideration and comment by the Committee.

### Summary

2. This report:
  - a) Identifies the Government's proposed changes to planning policy set out in the draft NPPF and associated documents (set out in Appendix 1) which seek to address concerns regarding housing delivery and supply;
  - b) Outlines the implications of the key proposed policy changes for the District Council and the Council's proposed response to these; and
  - c) Recommends that authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning to agree the Council's formal response to the draft NPPF and associated documents for submission to the Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government (MHCLG) by the 10 May 2018.

### Recommendations

3. **That the Scrutiny Committee:**
    - (i) Considers and comments on the key proposed changes to planning policy set out in the draft NPPF and associated documents, the implications of these for the District Council and proposed responses; and**
    - (ii) Delegates authority to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning to agree the Council's formal response on the draft NPPF and associated documents for submission to the Government.**
- 

### Background

4. The National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) was first introduced in 2012 and brought together and simplified previous planning policy and guidance. It established the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' which is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. In 2014 the Government also produced the online National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which provides more detail on planning matters in order to help planning practitioners.

5. During 2017 the Government consulted on a range of proposals to reform housing and planning policy in order to address concerns regarding housing supply and the need to address the shortage of homes in the country. The initial proposals were set out in the Housing White Paper 'Fixing our broken housing market' (January 2017) and further detail on the reforms was set out in 'Planning for the right homes in the right places' (September 2017). The Council submitted responses to both of these documents which can be found on the Council's website.
6. The Council made clear in its responses to these earlier documents that it supports the Government's intention to ensure that local authorities plan for homes in the right places. The Council's intention to support and deliver this objective is demonstrated by its approach set out in the recently adopted District Plan and in the preparation of a Site Allocations DPD, which is underway.
7. In March 2018 MHCLG published a suite of documents, including the draft NPPF, for consultation (listed in Appendix 1) which together set out the Government's proposed revised policies. The draft NPPF also reflects the changes to planning policy which has been set out in various Written Ministerial Statements since its original publication in 2012 including:
  - Support for small scale developers, custom and self-builders (Nov 2014);
  - Starter homes (March 2015); and
  - Neighbourhood planning (December 2016).
8. This report identifies the key changes established in this suite of documents, the implications for the District Council and the Council's proposed response for consideration and comment by the Committee. This report also sets out a general assessment of whether the Council's previous comments on the White Paper have been addressed in the draft NPPF.
9. The Government's aim of 'fixing the broken housing market' is a clear thread running through the proposed revised policies and the most significant changes set out in the consultation documents relate to policies to secure the delivery of a 'sufficient supply of homes'. Whilst the three overarching objectives of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) remain at the heart of the draft NPPF, the need to 'make effective use of land' is included within these objectives. In addition, a new chapter has been introduced in the draft NPPF setting out the Government's framework for how effective use of land can be achieved. The implications of the revised approach for the District Council are set below for detailed consideration.

## **Key Issues**

### ***Delivering Housing – standardised formula for establishing local housing need, meeting unmet needs of neighbouring authorities, and identifying land for homes***

10. The draft NPPF introduces a standardised methodology for setting housing needs in strategic plans and states that this approach must be used unless there are exceptional circumstances which justify an alternative approach. The Council welcomes any approach which delivers greater certainty to the starting point for plan making and therefore supports the principle.
11. In its previous response to the 'Planning for the right homes' document, the Council set out a range of concerns with the proposed standardised methodology and these

concerns have not been addressed in the draft NPPF. Therefore, it is recommended that the Council make the following comments in its formal response:

- The guidance requires the use of the 'National Household Projections' for the area, specifically projections for household growth over the first 10 years and requires the use of the ratio between house prices and workplace-based earnings to make an adjustment to take account of market signals. It is considered that a true measure of affordability should be based on residence-based earnings as it is residents that pay local housing costs and this approach would also take account of commuter's incomes. In addition, a broader basket of affordability indicators would result in a better assessment of the balance between demand and supply of dwellings. Using the proposed standardised methodology would give Mid Sussex a housing need of 1,112 dwellings per annum (2016 -2026) whereas the figure set out in the table accompanying the 'Planning for the Right Homes' document (which is based on residence-based earnings) gave a standardised figure of 1,016 dwellings per annum. This demonstrates the implications of using different approaches which is of concern; and
  - Measuring affordability in a single year as proposed is not considered a sufficiently robust measure, given the scope for peaks and troughs within the cyclical property market. The use of 5 year rolling averages would be a more accurate reflection of affordability.
12. The draft NPPF makes clear that the standardised methodology for setting housing need figures must take account of any needs which cannot be met within neighbouring areas. The principle of seeking to meet unmet needs of other authorities within the same housing market area was established in the NPPF in 2012 and the adopted District Plan housing figure includes provision to help address Crawley's unmet need. The draft NPPF requires a more rigorous approach to demonstrate how authorities have addressed this issue and set out detailed guidance on the preparation of Statements of Common Ground. The Council's proposed response to the consultation should set out its support for these proposals.
13. Policies introduce a requirement for strategic plans to set out a housing requirement figure for designated neighbourhood areas in order that housing numbers will not need testing at Neighbourhood Plan examinations. The adopted District Plan sets out an indicative housing requirement for parishes so in principle this is supported. However, there is concern that the application of this policy may introduce undesirable inflexibility and our response should set these concerns out. The strategic plan adopted by a Local Planning Authority should set the spatial strategy and allocate strategic sites. The approach must be able to reflect any allocation of additional strategic sites in the plan period (in, for example, a Site Allocations DPD) in accordance with the spatial strategy and this may reduce the housing requirement in Neighbourhood areas. In addition, if parishes are given a fixed figure, they are likely to perceive this as the absolute number that needs to be delivered and will resist further allocations through the Local Plan process which might be necessary to meet the overall housing requirement for the district as a whole.
14. The draft NPPF recognises the value of small sites in ensuring housing delivery and sets out a requirement that at least 20% of allocated sites should be half a hectare or less. The Council's proposed response is that, whilst agreeing that small sites make an important contribution the requirement there needs to be more clarity over whether the 20% applies to the proportion of sites or as a proportion of the total housing to be provided.

15. It is proposed that the Council's formal response set out the concerns outlined above as well as the view that setting a specific percentage of small sites is too prescriptive particularly as whether this is achievable is still to be tested.

### ***The Five-Year Housing Land Supply and the Housing Delivery Test***

16. The proposed revised policies indicate that an authority's five-year housing land supply should be measured against the adopted plan number (where it is less than five years old) before reverting to the number given by the proposed standardised methodology. Given that the Council has only recently adopted the District plan there are no immediate implications for Mid Sussex for the housing figure against which the Housing Delivery Test is applied.
17. The five-year supply can be demonstrated either through the Local Plan process or by preparing an Annual Position Statement. An Annual Position Statement is a practical way of formalising the approach however the Council's response should set out our concern that the proposed guidance requires a sign off process which might be unduly burdensome. As currently set out the Annual Position Statement is to be prepared in consultation with the Secretary of State. Given the number of statements that will need to be considered, this could introduce delays in the publication timeframe.
18. The draft NPPF continues to set out policies regarding the percentage buffer to be applied to the supply of specific deliverable sites but introduces a new 10% buffer (in addition to the 5% and 20% buffers currently set out in the 2012 NPPF) and clarifies when these should be applied.
19. The draft NPPF, the draft NPPG and the Housing Delivery Test Draft Measurement Rule Book set out the policy requirement and guidance on the application of a Housing Delivery Test. The Housing Delivery Test measures the total net homes delivered over the past 3 years compared to the total requirement for the same period. If the housing delivery rate falls below the number of homes required then certain consequences apply:
- an action plan must be prepared if housing delivery falls below 95%;
  - a 20% buffer must be added to an authority's five-year land supply if delivery falls below 85%; and
  - the presumption in favour of sustainable development will apply if delivery falls below 75%.

The action plan will have to set out the challenges facing the authority; actions to address under-delivery; will need to be prepared in consultation with a range of stakeholders including developers, promoters and landowners; and will need to be published within 6 months of the publication of the Housing Delivery Test.

20. The proposed introduction of an Annual Position Statement and Housing Delivery Test, with a specific formula removes any uncertainty regarding which buffer to apply and will improve consistency of approach across authorities. It is also likely to reduce the amount of time spent at local plan examination/S78 appeals and is therefore supported. Therefore the Council's proposed response should set out its support for these policy revisions.

### ***Effective Use of Land and Housing Density***

21. In principle, making the most effective use of land should help to reduce the amount of

land, particularly greenfield sites, required to meet housing need and is therefore supported. Many of the proposals in the draft NPPF are already established as principles in the adopted District Plan (including substantial weight to the use of brownfield land and the promotion of development of under-utilised land and buildings) and should therefore be welcomed in the Council's proposed response.

22. The draft NPPF introduces a new requirement that planning policies and decisions should support opportunities to use the air space above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes. This should be cautiously supported given that the draft NPPF indicates that such 'upward extensions' should be consistent with prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and the street scene and should not have an impact on existing or new residents' amenity.
23. The draft NPPF introduces a requirement for local planning authorities to support proposals for housing development on land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific use in plans, including the use of retail and employment land for homes 'in areas of high housing demand'. Whilst the reuse of previously developed land for housing is supported in principle, there are concerns about the impact this approach might have on the Council's economic strategy. The proposed response by the Council should therefore require that policies of the draft NPPF should be strengthened to ensure that this policy does not undermine other Council strategies, have an impact on key economic sectors, or impact on the vitality and viability of town and village centres. In addition, the Council considers that rather than applying this approach 'in areas of high housing demand' this presumption should only be applied where an authority cannot meet its OAN and our formal response should make this clear.
24. The draft NPPF recognises that a key way of making effective use of land is avoid homes being built at low densities and that developments should make optimal use of the potential of sites. To achieve this, the draft NPPF indicates that plans should include the use of minimum density standards and applications should be refused where they fail to make efficient use of land. The Council supports this intention and our formal response should make this clear.

### ***Affordable Housing and Housing Mix***

25. Revised guidance is set out on the types of development which should provide affordable housing and the adopted District Plan approach set out in Policy DP31 complies with the new guidance.
26. The draft NPPF also sets out policies on types of development which should be exempt from the requirement to provide affordable housing including Build to Rent homes. Although such developments will meet a need for housing there is concern that Build for Rent Homes will be let at market rents and therefore could be out of reach for those who need affordable housing. It is considered that such developments should still be required to provide an affordable housing contribution and our response should seek appropriate amendments to these revised provisions.
27. In addition an exemption to affordable housing provision is also proposed for development which provides specialist accommodation for people with specific needs, such as purpose built accommodation for the elderly. Again, there is no justification for this exemption.
28. It is recommended that in the response to the consultation we should require amendments to the draft NPPF to amend this and clarify that if it is not practicable for such developments to make an on-site contribution, because of the provision of onsite

facilities and associated care/support charges, then an off-site commuted sum could be negotiated if appropriate.

### ***Incentives to Encourage Developers to Build Out***

29. The previous government consultation on 'Fixing the Broken Housing Market' recognised the need to ensure that developers did not 'land bank' planning permissions. The draft NPPF encourages local planning authorities to consider imposing planning conditions requiring development to begin within a timescale shorter than the relevant default period, where this would expedite the development without threatening deliverability or viability. In addition, Councils are advised to work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes. Finally, as part of the Housing Delivery Test, where delivery has fallen below 95% of the LPA's housing requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan to identify causes of under-delivery and to identify actions to increase delivery in the future.
30. It is recommended that the Council's response should welcomed these measures but also set out the Council's concern that the draft NPPF does not set out further measures to require developers to deliver planning permissions and does not set out penalties for developers if this is not undertaken.

### ***Plan Making – Strategic and local policies, maintaining effective co-operation, neighbourhood planning and 5-year reviews***

31. There are significant changes proposed in the draft NPPF to plan-making. Whilst as a minimum, authorities will have to prepare a plan setting out a limited suite of strategic priorities (i.e. those which set out the pattern and scale of development, numbers of homes and amount of employment and town centre space needed, infrastructure requirements, and policies regarding conservation of natural and historic assets) there is no longer a requirement to set out local policies.
32. In addition, the draft NPPF indicates that local policies can be prepared either through Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans. The adopted District Plan currently sets out both strategic and local policies and it is considered that this approach sets out a robust framework and guidance within which parishes can establish local policies in their neighbourhood plans. The Council considers that in some circumstances it will continue to be helpful for the local planning authority to set out a framework for 'local' issues against which Neighbourhood Plans can develop locationally specific detail and the Council's response to the draft NPPF should seek this clarification.
33. The draft NPPF includes policies on maintaining effective co-operation with other authorities and statutory bodies on strategic matters which cross administrative boundaries. The adopted District Plan already makes clear that the Council will continue to work constructively and on an ongoing basis with adjoining authorities and the wider sub region to address strategic matters. This proposal should therefore be supported in the Council's formal response.
34. The draft National Planning Practice Guidance (draft NPPG) sets out further detail on Neighbourhood Planning which includes the approach set out in the Written Ministerial Statement on when neighbourhood plans are protected from the presumption in favour of sustainable development which is helpful. The draft NPPG also sets out guidance for neighbourhood planning groups aiming to allocate sites for development on how to carry out an appraisal of options and an assessment of sites against clear criteria. The guidance on setting housing requirement figures for neighbourhood plans is dealt with above.

35. The draft NPPF indicates that policy reviews should be completed no later than five years from the adoption date of the Plan and that strategic policies will need updating at least once every five years if their applicable local housing figure has/or is expected to increase. The need to keep plans up-to-date to reflect changing housing need, economic cycles and latest planning policy and guidance is supported and the adopted District Plan includes the requirement to review the Plan in 5 years. However, there is concern that more frequent formal reviews of strategic policies may conflict with the strategic certainty being sought by the draft NPPF which considers that strategic policies should look ahead over a 15-year horizon and this point of concern should be raised in our consultation response. In addition, there are concerns about cost and resource implications for the Council although it is noted that the draft NPPF has introduced changes to ensure a proportionate approach to the evidence base in respect of both local and strategic policies to support a sound plan. The Council agrees with the need for a proportionate approach and this should be welcomed in any formal response.
36. The draft NPPF makes clear that requirement to review plans at least every 5 years does not apply to neighbourhood plans. This should be supported in the Council's response.

### ***CIL, S106 and Pooling Restrictions***

37. The reforms to developer contributions seek to reduce complexity, increase certainty and improve transparency in the S106 process. These aspirations are supported. In the longer term the Government has indicated its intention to consider a more fundamental review of the system including the possibility of setting a national level for developer contributions.
38. Current CIL Regulations prevent authorities from using more than five section 106 planning obligations to fund a single infrastructure project. The Regulation was established in order to incentivise local planning authorities to introduce CIL. However the Government's research identified that this approach was a key concern to both local authorities and developers as it made the process more difficult and causes problems for large or strategic sites. Therefore the draft NPPF and draft NPPG set out a more flexible approach to remove pooling restrictions where it would not be feasible for authorities to adopt CIL or where significant development is planned on several large strategic sites. The principle of this approach should be welcomed in our draft response given the allocation of strategic sites in the District Plan however there is concern about the definition of 'strategic'. Therefore whilst the Council should cautiously welcome the principles it should safeguard its final position until the draft Regulations, to support the changes, are published and reviewed.
39. There are no changes set out which would affect the current arrangements regarding distribution of a percentage of CIL to neighbourhood groups and this should be welcomed.

### ***Viability***

40. The Council's draft Development Viability SPD currently the subject of public consultation sets out the Council's requirements in terms of the submission of Viability Assessments, the information which should be included and guidance on future viability review mechanisms. The approach set out complies with the proposals on viability in the draft NPPF and would not therefore require a review of the draft SPD.

## ***Design***

41. The draft NPPF dilutes the emphasis on 'creating a high quality built environment' replacing this with 'fostering well-designed environments'. Given that the Council places great importance on design, as evidenced by having a Design Review Panel and running a Design Award, It is recommended that the Council's response should propose that the draft NPPF strengthens design considerations.

## ***Decision Making***

42. The draft NPPF encourages planning authorities to approach decision making in 'creative' and in a 'positive way' and there is increased emphasis on working proactively with applicants to find solutions. In addition, to help speed up decision making, the draft NPPF sets out a role for authorities to encourage applicants to engage with statutory and non-statutory consultees prior to submission of applications and seeks regular reviews of Local Lists of information requirements to be submitted with planning applications to ensure that authorities are not making onerous demands.
43. The Council is supportive of all these changes and has already implemented new initiatives to make decision making more efficient including the establishment of the Developers' Liaison Forum to discuss improvements to process. The Council already regularly reviews its Local List, the last review having been undertaken in June 2017. Any response should therefore set out the Council's support for these policies.

## ***Implementation and Transitional Arrangements***

44. The policies in the Framework will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications on the date of publication.
45. The draft NPPF indicates plans will have to be reviewed to assess if revisions are required to reflect the Government's strategy. At this stage officers consider that it is unlikely that revisions will be required to the Plan however a comprehensive assessment will be undertaken once the final NPPF is published.
46. The provisions of the draft NPPF and associated documents will have implications for Council's preparation of the Site Allocations DPD. In particular, the proposals seek to focus viability assessments on plan making rather than decision taking in order to speed up the planning application process. In addition, the need to ensure effective use of land and the assessment of proportion of sites which are small will also have to be considered in the next steps of preparing the Sites DPD.

## **Next Steps**

47. The deadline for responses to the consultation on the draft NPPF and associated documents is 10 May 2018. This report recommends that authority is delegated to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning to agree the formal response, taking into account comments made by Scrutiny Committee, for submission to MHCLG.

## **Financial Implications**

48. There are no direct financial implications for the Council as a result of the draft NPPF. However, the emphasis in the proposed policies on ensuring developers consider infrastructure issues early in the development of their proposals and changes to CIL and S106 should have indirect financial benefits for the District.



### **Risk Management Implications**

49. When the final NPPF and associated documents are published the Council will have to undertake a review of the District Plan to assess general conformity to determine if it would have to be subject of early revision. An initial assessment at this stage demonstrates that the District Plan is in conformity with the proposals in the draft NPPF.
50. The Council will carefully consider the implications of the draft NPPF on the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD (highlighted in Paragraphs 42 above) to ensure that the approach taken meets the future requirements.

### **Equality and Customer Service Implications**

51. The draft NPPF sets out policies to ensure delivery of sustainable development which meets social objectives of meeting the needs of all. Key objectives are the provision of sufficient homes to ensure access to housing and the provision of infrastructure so that all members of society have access to homes and services.

### **Other Material Implications**

52. There are no other material implications.

### **Background Papers**

The Council's Response to:

- The Housing White Paper 'Fixing our broken housing market' (January 2017); and
- The Government's 'Planning for the right homes in the right places' (September 2017).

The Council submitted responses to both of these documents can be found on the Council's website.

## **APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS**

- The draft National Planning Policy Framework (draft NPPF);
- The draft methodology for calculating the Housing Delivery Test;
- Proposals for reforming developer contributions are set out in two documents ‘Supporting housing delivery through developer contributions’ and ‘Draft Planning practice guidance for viability’. It is anticipated that these proposals will be delivered through regulations;
- Draft updates to the National Planning Practice Guidance; and
- Associated papers, including the Governments response to the consultations on the previous consultation documents.

## 7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY PROGRESS REPORT 2017

REPORT OF: HEAD OF REGULATORY SERVICES  
Contact Officer: Neal Barton, Policy and Performance Manager  
Email: [Neal.Barton@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Neal.Barton@midsussex.gov.uk) Tel: 01444 477588  
Wards Affected: All  
Key Decision: No  
Report to: Scrutiny Committee for Community, Housing and Planning  
Date of meeting 21 March 2018

---

### Purpose of Report

1. This report provides Members with an update on progress in 2017 against the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme 2016 – 2020.

### Recommendations

- 2. The Scrutiny Committee is requested to endorse the Council's approach to meeting its duties under the Equality Act, as evidenced by the Equality and Diversity Progress Report 2017 included at Appendix 1.**
- 

### Background

3. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the Council to publish an annual report setting out progress to their Equality and Diversity Scheme. A new scheme for 2016 – 2020 was approved by Council on 23 March 2016 and it was agreed that annual reports on progress should be provided to the relevant Scrutiny Committee.
4. The Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme has been shaped by the Equality Act 2010, which introduced a number of responsibilities for councils, including a public sector equality duty and a requirement to promote equality of opportunity between those with "protected characteristics" and others. The public sector equality duty means that the Council must in the exercise of its functions have due regard to:
  - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
  - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
  - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The nine protected characteristics are:

- age
- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- pregnancy and maternity
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership
- gender reassignment

The Act also introduced specific duties for public bodies to publish Equality Objectives and equality data to show their compliance with the duty.

4. The Council continues to mainstream its equalities work with our customer services activities, recognising that meeting the needs of individual customers for Council services is consistent with good equalities practice.
5. In addition to considering the needs of those with protected characteristics, our equalities work looks at disadvantage arising from income or skill level and by virtue of where they live.

### **Progress Report 2017**

6. The Annual Report for 2017 is included at Appendix 1 and sets out progress against the Council's Equality Objectives. Particular areas of progress include:
  - the holding of the annual play day events in our main parks at Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath, which attracted over 2,000 local children and their families.
  - further progress with the dementia friendly Mid Sussex initiative to develop Dementia Friendly Communities in each of the three towns in the District.
  - targeting improvements to the health of vulnerable people through the work of the Health and Wellbeing Team and concessionary use of our leisure centres.
  - providing English conversation courses for members of the BME community with English as a second language.
  - further development of Silver Sunday in the District, which is intended to mitigate the problem of loneliness amongst older people. This comprised a main event held at East Grinstead and the Council supporting through its grants scheme the holding of a number of other events across Mid Sussex.
  - investment in our property assets and providing facilities with improved accessibility.
  - providing Heat for Health energy roadshows to provide local people with advice on support on how to keep their homes warm and save on energy bills.
  - continuing to use our Corporate Grants Scheme to provide for organisations that support vulnerable people, with the completion of a review of the scheme to ensure that the funding is well targeted.
7. The Annual Report provides examples of work that has been done over the past year to improve the lives of some of the most disadvantaged members of our community. It concludes that overall good progress has been made in meeting our duties and highlights further initiatives to be developed in the year ahead.
8. In addition to service improvement for those with protected characteristics, the progress report comprises information about the composition of the Council's staff with regard to age, ethnicity, disability and gender. This includes the Council's gender pay gap and related information, which is required to be published under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.
9. Members are asked to consider the Annual Report and advise whether there are any areas of the Council's Equality and Diversity activity that require further emphasis.

### **Policy Context**

10. The Annual Report demonstrates progress against the Council's Equality Objectives. The delivery of these objectives will make a major contribution to the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.

### **Other Options Considered**

11. The report updates on progress to the Equality and Diversity Scheme, which is designed to set out a programme to meet the Council's statutory requirements under the Equality Act. No other practicable options were identified.

### **Financial Implications**

12. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### **Risk Management Implications**

13. The Progress Report helps the Council to continue to demonstrate that it is meeting the public sector equalities duty under the Equality Act and to avoid the risks associated with non-compliance.

### **Equalities and Customer Services Implications**

14. Customer service and ensuring equality of access are of continuing importance, especially with regard to meeting the needs of those who are vulnerable or may find it difficult to access our services. The report sets out steps to meet the needs of vulnerable groups and refers to the Council's programme of impact assessments, which are designed to promote equality and to identify and address the barriers that may prevent people accessing its services.

### **Other Material Implications**

15. None.

### **Background Papers**

16. None.



# **MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **Equality and Diversity**

## **Progress Report 2017**

February 2018

## INTRODUCTION

This is the Council's eighth annual Equality and Diversity progress report, setting out the achievements made in furthering equality and diversity in Mid Sussex. It highlights the key pieces of work we have undertaken as a District Council and sets out the future direction of action to provide fair and inclusive services.

Progress is reported against the context of the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme 2016-20, which contains a set of Equality Objectives as follows:

**Objective 1-** We will show leadership and commitment in promoting equality and diversity.

**Objective 2-** We will consider the needs of individuals across the whole community, and especially those groups protected by the Equality Act 2010, when we plan and deliver our services.

**Objective 3-** We will seek to prevent discrimination and to promote good relations between different sectors of the community.

**Objective 4-** As an employer, we will seek to promote equality and respect for diversity in the workplace by providing appropriate policies, training and support.

The Scheme identifies actions to support the delivery of these objectives. It also sets out measures to ensure that the Council meet its public sector equality duty and ensures that discrimination does not occur on the grounds of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. These protected characteristics are race; disability; gender; gender reassignment; sexual orientation; religion or belief; age; pregnancy and maternity; marriage and civil partnership.

## PROGRESS IN DELIVERING SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS IN 2017

This section identifies service improvements for the protected groups, together with those who may find it difficult to access services by virtue of where they live and those with poor skills or low incomes. Some of our initiatives cover a range of equalities issues. These include our systems for reporting and dealing with hate crime and anti-social behaviour; safeguarding; the operation of our grants schemes; provision of activities through our leisure centres; and the Health and Wellbeing service.

### Hate Crime Reporting

For 2016/17 there were 98 recorded hate crimes in Mid Sussex, broken down as follows (figures for 2015/16 are shown in brackets):

Type of Hate Crime	Mid Sussex	Sussex Police area
Disability	12 (12)	188 (184)
Race	62 (58)	1,434 (1,169)
Religion	4 (5)	148 (129)
Sexual orientation	19 (9)	332 (299)
Transgender	1 (2)	82 (40)
Total	98 (86)	2,184 (1,821)

A hate incident/hate crime is any incident where the victim of another person believes that they, the victim have been targeted because of their perceived race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or gender identity. The total number of hate crimes across the Sussex Police area rose by 19.9% in 2016/17, compared to the previous year. Sussex Police point out that hate crimes are under reported and the increases are seen as the success of

initiatives to raise awareness of hate crime and how it can be reported. Work has been especially geared towards the greater reporting of hate crimes involving disability. Sussex Police has also put an emphasis on building trust with the LGBT community to report homophobic and transgender motivated hate crime.

## **Safeguarding**

Mid Sussex District Council continues to work in partnership with both the West Sussex Safeguarding Children's Board and Safeguarding Adults Board to ensure co-ordinated responses across West Sussex. The Council's new Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy was adopted in 13 December 2017 accompanied by a programme of training for both Members and Officers. Also In 2017 a project was launched to raise the profile of safeguarding within our communities, with a focus on Child Sexual Exploitation but also serving as a platform for all safeguarding issues for both Children and Adults.

## **Support to community organisations through our Grants Scheme**

The operation of our grants scheme continues to support a wide range of community organisations and projects that seek to assist vulnerable groups. The Council has made protection of funding for the grants programme a priority. Overall in 2016/17 a total of £1,389,805 of Economic, Community Development and Facility Grants were awarded from the Council's grants budget and s106 money, attracting an estimated further £2,050,845 of investment into projects and facilities.

The grants scheme includes partnership agreements with a core of voluntary organisations that support vulnerable people of all ages and backgrounds, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB); Age UK; Horsham and Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (HAMSVVA); and Action in Rural Sussex. These partnership agreements are now awarded over a three year period to provide continuity and financial security to these organisations.

Information about the contributions of the partnership agreement organisations to disadvantaged groups in Mid Sussex is provided below:

- The three CAB centres in Mid Sussex dealt with 10,930 enquiries in Mid Sussex. The top advice categories were benefits and tax credits (29%); employment (13%); housing (12%); relationships and family (10%); and debt (9%).
- Age UK has around 800 older people in Mid Sussex who are members of their three centres in Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath. The centres provide older people with a place where they can meet and socialise, enjoy a cooked lunch or take part in activities like short mat bowls, arts and crafts, quizzes and exercise classes.
- Horsham and Mid Sussex Voluntary Action support local charities, volunteers, community groups, non-profit organisations and social enterprises. HAMSVVA provide local voluntary groups with expert advice on funding generation, employment law, management and training. They also help to promote the value of volunteering and assist local organisations to recruit more volunteers. The Council is continuing to provide financial support to this organisation, despite the withdrawal of funding by Horsham District Council from April 2018.
- Action in Rural Sussex (AirS) provides valuable support to village halls, which are often the heartbeat of rural communities. This has included provision of legal, organisational and development advice for the trustees and management committees running these facilities on behalf of local people.



## **Leisure Centres**

The Council's Leisure Centres provide a balanced range of activities to suit all sectors of the community. The contract to run our Leisure Centres includes a target for the percentage of concessionary use. Groups who benefit from lower charges include the over 60's; juniors of 16/17 years of age; students in full-time education; those in receipt of certain benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance; and registered carers. In 2016/17, concessionary attendances amounted to 32% of the total, which is in line with the contract requirement.

The Leisure Centres also work through the GP Exercise Referral Programme and provide activities for local schools and community groups. For example, children from local schools attend the Triangle group swimming lessons and the centre also played host to the Parallel Youth Games in June where more than 400 disabled children from across Sussex took part in a multi-sport event.

## **The Health and Wellbeing service**

The Health and Wellbeing Hub continues to be developed with a high emphasis on targeting people in the community who are at risk of the poorest health. It focuses on the prevention of cardio-vascular disease and provides advice, guidance and support to local residents in lose weight, get active, stop smoking and reduce alcohol intake. Examples of their work this year have included:

- The falls prevention programme which has been integrated into the Local Falls Pathway (especially useful for older people to improve their strength and mobility) with classes held in East Grinstead and Haywards Heath.
- Wellbeing Coaches who support people with complex health and wellbeing issues on a one to one basis.
- The prediabetes programme, which is delivered in GP surgeries across Mid Sussex and targets people at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. People at risk include those with a high body mass index and adults from ethnic minority backgrounds. The majority of referrals have been via GP practices.
- The Wellbeing Team provided a free Health and Wellbeing event for older people at Chequer Mead, East Grinstead in October to learn more about staying fit and well in later life. The event was attended by over 50 older people and included a free Wellbeing MOT and NHS Health Check; the opportunity to explore mindfulness; free exercise classes and information about local groups and activities in East Grinstead.
- Support for the wellbeing of carers, including a talk to the Alzheimer's Carers Support Group and attendance at the Mid Sussex Older People's Council event for carers.

There is also a Mid Sussex Health and Wellbeing Network which is made up of approximately 80 organisations, both statutory and third sector working within the broad field of wellbeing. This is convened by the Hub quarterly and is a key source of exchanging information and getting referrals to and from the service. Specific meetings this year have included the Heat for Health Conference with the Mid Sussex Older Peoples Council; support available in Mid Sussex for those with long-term conditions; and support to access community services such as community transport.

## **FOCUSED WORK AROUND PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS IN 2017**

The next section of the report identifies service improvements for the protected groups last year.

### **Disability**

The 2011 census showed that 14.2% of Mid Sussex households contained at least one person with a long term illness, health problem or disability which limits their daily activities. Health Study information and projections to 2030, suggest a particular increase in the number of people aged 65+ with a disability in Mid Sussex.

#### **Specific action in 2017 included:**

- The Council's Housing Standards Team provided 81 Disabled Facilities Grants during 2016/17. These delivered a range of home adaptations to help disabled people to live more independently in their own homes, including ramps, stairlifts, adapting kitchens for wheelchair use and replacing baths with level access showers.
- 2 wheelchair accessible new affordable housing units have been provided in 2016/17.
- The Council has joined the Compass Card Scheme, which helps young people with special education needs or disabilities and their families enjoy significant discounts on a range of leisure activities. In Mid Sussex as well as Places for People discounts, cardholders can enjoy half price sports activities at parks in Burgess Hill, Lindfield and Haywards Heath.
- The Wellbeing Team have developed a pilot weight management course specifically for people with learning difficulties, working with Impact Advocacy Services. This was delivered initially at The Signposts Drop in Service, the Old Post Office, Burgess Hill.
- A new evacuation chair and safe area have been provided at Oaklands to allow people with disabilities to be safely evacuated from the Council Chamber in the event of an emergency.
- Grants have been awarded to local groups that promote the interests of people with disabilities, including support for Disability Access – East Grinstead towards their running costs, the Tadpoles Swimming Club based at the King's Centre in East Grinstead which provides swimming for people with disabilities, Sussex Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus; Kangaroos Saturday and Holiday Club for young people with learning disabilities; and Summerhaven for mental health drop-in sessions.
- The Chairman of the Council's chosen charity for the year is Sullivan's heroes, a local organisation that funds home adaptations for disabled children that allows them to be cared for in the home.
- A ceiling mounted hoist and wall mounted adjustable height bench were fitted in The Dolphin disabled changing facility to bring it up to the Changing Places National Standard. The disabled changing rooms in all three of our leisure centres now meet the national standard and are included on the Changing Places National Register.
- The Council through its taxi licensing role has been monitoring compliance with sections 165 and 167 of the Equality Act. This places duties on the drivers of designated wheelchair accessible vehicles to maintain the accessibility of their vehicles.

### **Age- older people**

Age is a fundamental factor affecting people's life experiences. According to the 2011 Census, 18.1% of the Mid Sussex population are aged 65 and the Office for National Statistics has projected that this will increase to 21.2% by 2021. Figures from the 2016 West

Sussex Life Report suggest that the population of Mid Sussex over 65 has increased by 14.5% from the Census to the time of the 2015 ONS estimate- from 25,307 to 28,980. The Life Report also states that in 2013 there were 2,154 people with dementia in Mid Sussex and predicts that we will see an increase of 67% by 2030.

#### **Specific action in 2017 included:**

- The Community Connections Directory of Services for Older People was issued by the Health and Wellbeing Team, developed in partnership with organisations working with, and for, older people in Mid Sussex. This now includes an on-line version, which allows groups to keep their service information up to date <http://www.community-connections.org.uk/>
- This year's Silver Sunday event was held at the Meridian Hall, East Grinstead in October. Silver Sunday is intended to mitigate the problem of loneliness amongst older people and to provide an opportunity for them to join together and make new connections. Grant funding of £250 per organisation was made available as part of the Community and Economic Grants Programme and these helped to fund eleven Silver Sunday events held across the District including in Hassocks, Ardingly and Copthorne.
- The Council co-ordinates the Dementia Friendly Mid Sussex Group comprising the three local town Dementia Action Alliances and West Sussex County Council. The group meets to work towards dementia friendly communities across the district, share good practice and undertake joint projects.
- The Council's work in support of Dementia Friendly Mid Sussex has also included a dementia awareness event at Clair Hall attended by over 200 people. This featured a "Virtual Dementia Tour" providing an insight into what it is like to live with the condition. The Council also provided a grant to Know Dementia's Memory Moments Café to support a monthly café event which aims to support and stimulate people living with dementia in Haywards Heath.
- The Council has made a number of grant awards to organisation that support older people in the District, including grants to Age UK East Grinstead for volunteer village agents to provide an enhanced outreach service for isolated older people.

#### **Age – younger people**

The Council facilitated the Mid Sussex District Council youth council called the 'Youth Voice', which disbanded in January 2016 due to a decrease in numbers. The Council continues to work with West Sussex County Council's Youth Cabinet who have young members resident in Mid Sussex. Elections for 2018/19 were held in March and were promoted by Mid Sussex District Council on our website.

The Council's Better Young Lives Coordinator leads a forum of professionals from both the statutory and voluntary sector to ensure better lives and outcomes for children and young people. The current number of partners is 66 representing 34 organisations. Four meetings are held per year with updates given by local organisations on the services provided.

Better Young Lives Partners responded to a survey to understand any training needs required and during Sussex Safeguarding Week in November, three Safeguarding sessions were run one in each of the main towns working with the Council's Safeguarding Officer and targeting voluntary youth organisations. Also during this week a workshop was organised to look at Young People's Mental Health Issues delivered by YMCA South Downs Link Group. The attendance for all of the training organised totalled 40.

### **Specific action in 2017 included:**

- The fifth annual play day events were held in our main parks at Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath. The theme of this year's events was "Wheels in Motion". The free events are designed to celebrate National Play Day and the campaign to highlight the importance of play in people's lives. This year's events were attended by more than 2,000 local children and their families.
- The fourth annual Young Volunteer of the Year awards were held at Borde Hill Gardens in June to coincide with National Volunteers week. This celebrates the work of young people in the District and can range from caring for family members to volunteering in their local community group. Awards included Young Community Volunteer, Young Leader, Young Achiever and the Chairman's Special award. This year there was also a new peer nominated award.
- Skatefest 2017 was held at Haywards Heath Skate Park in October and was attended by over 80 young people, who enjoyed an afternoon of music, art and freestyle tricks. Major improvements are planned to the facilities over the next 12 months and the event was part of the process of involving the skater community in the design. This was followed up with the Skatepark Consultation event in December based at Tory's Café where young people had the opportunity to meet the Skatepark designer and give feedback and their suggestions. The design has been finalised and work started in January.
- The Council again sponsored the Young Craftsperson of the Year award at the South of England Show.
- The Council proactively utilised digital communication such as twitter and Facebook to reach out to a wider audience, including young people and parents/carers of young children. The majority of those who attended the Playdays and Skatefest said they heard about the events through Facebook and twitter.

### **Race**

The 2011 Census showed that 9.7% of the Mid Sussex population are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Groups. "White Other" is the biggest of the BME Groups at 4.8%, with Asian or Asian British: Indian the largest single other group at 1%:

- The Council coordinates the Equality and Inclusion group (a sub-group of Better Young Lives). The group brings partners together to discuss and share knowledge and good practice to promote equal and inclusive services for all communities.
- The Council's Community Development Officer has organised English Conversation classes for people with English as a second language. Sessions have been held at Burgess Hill and East Grinstead and focus on themes relating to daily living. The lessons have been provided in response to feedback from members of BME communities in Mid Sussex. Following the course, the participants are advised how to access accredited language courses.
- The Council's taxi licensing requirements include a spoken English proficiency test. Assistance is being provided to those failing this test to access appropriate tuition through such bodies as Aspire Adult Education or the Workers' Education Association.

### **Gypsies and Travellers**

- We have previously worked to assess the need for additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in the District and are identifying potential sites for their location. The Traveller Sites Allocations Development Plan is being taking forward alongside the District Plan.

- The Council continues to manage the Bedelands site at Burgess Hill, which provides 9 plots for Gypsies and Travellers.
- At the Playdays held in the Summer, children got the opportunity to learn about local history by visiting a real Gypsy Vardo, the traditional horse-drawn wagon that was used by British Romani people as their home. Friends, Families and Travellers (FFT) also held a stall at all three Playdays. Local Traveller families came along and joined with the wider local community.

## **Sexual Orientation**

- Hate crime reporting on the basis of homophobia continues to be reported through the Crime and Disorder Partnership.

## **Religion or Belief**

Churches are often the first to recognise problems in their local communities and many offer help to vulnerable people who are affected. The Council's work in this area centres upon countering religiously motivated hate crime, helping to promote good relations between the different faiths in Mid Sussex and using our links with faith based groups to provide access to services.

- Our Housing Needs Team refer people to the Haywards Heath, East Grinstead and Burgess Hill Foodbanks, which have connections to local churches. The Burgess Hill foodbank also runs a service in Hurstpierpoint. Vouchers are provided which can be redeemed for three days of emergency food. 99 food vouchers were issued by the Housing Needs Team in the period January to December 2017.
- Church groups were contacted to input to the annual count of rough sleepers in Mid Sussex and were involved in the organisation of the Silver Sunday events.

## **Gender and Gender Reassignment**

- The Wellbeing Team is providing a Walking Football Scheme for men over 50, which has been well attended. There have also been some men only Weight off Workshops provided. The proportion of male clients of the Wellbeing Team has increased from 28% in 2016/17 to 36% in 2017/18.
- Community safety- our hate crime incident reporting includes the recording of hate crime motivated by transphobia, which refers to various kinds of aversion towards transsexual people.

### Gender Identity Issues in Mid Sussex

With regard to gender identify issues amongst young people, Better Young Lives currently has 66 partners representing 34 organisations from the voluntary and statutory sector. The forum provides an opportunity to share information and network. The group has discussed support services available for young people facing gender identity and wider LGBT issues.

Allsorts Youth project is based in Brighton and is an organisation that supports LGBTU (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or unsure) young people. They have been invited to the Better Young Lives meeting to give the partners the opportunity of finding out more about their services. Young people in Mid Sussex are able to access IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance) from the West Sussex County Council Find it Out service based at Park Centre, Burgess Hill where they can be referred to a range of support groups and organisations including the Youth Emotional Support Service (YES).

## Men and Women Suffering Domestic Abuse

An important aspect of our gender related service provision is the assistance provided for people suffering domestic abuse. The number of recorded domestic abuse crimes in Mid Sussex has risen in the calendar year 2017 to 822 crimes compared to 661 crimes in 2016. This is seen as an indication of the success of measures to encourage the reporting of domestic abuse and accessing support.

Domestic abuse is one of the priorities for the Mid Sussex Community Safety Plan. There are a range of services and initiatives aimed at responding to domestic abuse. These include the WORTH services, which provide support to victims of domestic abuse and are based at hospitals in West Sussex, and the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) which brings together responsible agencies in West Sussex to discuss those cases with the highest risk of harm.

The Council's Housing Needs Team had 43 requests for housing advice in cases involving a violent breakdown of relationship with a partner in 2016/17, compared to 63 cases in the previous year. There is a cross-tenure outreach service in place provided by Stonham Housing Association. This provides housing related support to victims of abuse to enable them to be "safe at home" or enable victims to secure a safe home.

The Strategic Joint Action Group (SJAG) supports community initiatives through its Targeted Intervention Project. This has included a Freedom Programme and Recovery Tool Kit run through Safe in Sussex, which delivers a 12 week course to support women suffering domestic violence.

## **Residential Location**

The Council recognises that whether our residents live in a rural or urban location can affect how they access our services. Issues from rural isolation include transport difficulties for those dependent upon public transport, high local housing prices and a lack of community facilities.

### Supporting local communities

- The Targeted Intervention Project supports a number of community based projects, including initiatives based around Bentswood in Haywards Heath. These have included work with the Bentswood Community Project for a Story bag literacy project; a mental health awareness coping toolbox initiative; and volunteer training to build the capacity of the community to support itself.
- The Targeted Intervention Project has also supported a Crawley Town Kicks Project weekly football session based at Mount Noddy Recreation Park, East Grinstead. This has delivered an age appropriate health and nutrition workshop for participants. Four young people have completed a Sports Leader Playmaker Award.

### Community facilities

- A grant of £144,440 has been provided by the Council towards the cost of rebuilding the village hall, sports and social facilities at Ansty Recreation Ground.
- Slaugham Parish Council has been awarded a Facility Grant of £666,434 in total to construct a new community hall, sports changing facilities, ancillary access road and car park at Finches Field, Pease Pottage.
- The Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre in East Grinstead was awarded a £53,500 grant for building refurbishments and improvements.

- S106 funding has been released to fund the increase in capacity of medical centres at Lindfield and Northlands Wood.
- Funding has been agreed with Lewes District Council for improvements to the play facilities at World's End Recreation Ground, Burgess Hill informed by consultation with the local community completed over the summer.

### Housing Initiatives

- New affordable housing delivered in 2016/17 included 73 outside of the three main towns. Since April 2017, a further 39 have been delivered in more rural areas, including Lindfield Rural, Crawley Down, Pease Pottage, Pyecombe, Ansty and Hurstpierpoint.

### **Income or Skill Level**

The District is generally prosperous, but there are pockets of deprivation in each of the three main towns. Worklessness is more prevalent amongst those in social housing and people on low incomes are also in danger of suffering from fuel poverty. There was an estimated 35 NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training) young people in Mid Sussex at December 2017.

- Support has been provided for 16-19 year old NEETS through the NEETS Forum and commissioning the Positive Placement Scheme delivered by the YMCA Downlink Group. The Group received a national award for helping to transform the lives of young people and connect them with mentors in their local communities. Positive Placements received 88 referrals of young people in 2016/17, with 54 going on to education, employment or training and 6 referred to specialist support. There is a 90% successful outcome for this project.
- One of the pilots for the Juno project- "This is me" programme for young women has taken place in Burgess Hill. This works with young female NEETs and looks at enterprise and employability, self-esteem and confidence. So far 100% of girls have gone on to work or college or are still on the course. 80% have identified they have more confidence and 20% took counselling outside the programme for drugs/alcohol issues.
- The Heat for Health project provided energy roadshows in November designed to provide local residents with advice and support on how to keep their homes warm and save on energy bills. Roadshows were held at libraries in Hurstpierpoint, East Grinstead, Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill. Assistance included advice on saving on energy bills through installing insulation and switching suppliers. The roadshows were attended by 55 people.
- 176 new affordable housing units were delivered in 2016/17, 118 for rent and 58 shared ownership. A further 71 new affordable homes have been delivered in the period April to December 2017.
- The Council's Housing Needs Team and Benefits Service have been working with the Department for Works and Pensions and local voluntary organisations to prepare for the introduction of Universal Credit in June.
- The micro-business grant scheme has provided grants of a maximum of £2,000 and is aimed at businesses with less than 10 employees who are looking to expand and/or take on an apprentice. 48 businesses have received assistance.

## Equality and Diversity and the Council's staff

In addition to looking at improvements to services in the context of the equality and diversity, this progress report also provides information about the Council's staff. As part of the requirement to publish Equality Data, we produce an annual monitoring report about the composition of our staff compared to the background Mid Sussex population. This includes information about age, gender, pay gap, ethnicity, sexuality, religion and belief and is published on the Council's website <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/my-council/about-the-council/equality-and-diversity/equality-data/>

At the end of December 2017 the Council had 315 employees, 224 full-time and 91 part-time, with the following profile:

126 (40%) are men and 189 (60%) women  
55% of senior managers (defined as the top 5% of earners) are women  
15 (4.76%) have identified themselves as disabled  
13 (4.12%) are from ethnic minority communities  
2 (0.6%) are under 21 years of age  
24 (7.6%) are 21-29  
66 (21.0%) are 30-39  
87 (27.6%) are 40-49  
103 (32.7%) are 50-59  
33 (10.5%) are over 60.

The Council's gender pay gap in 2016/17 was 9.2% calculated by comparing the mean average male and female employee pay. This compares to 11.92% in 2015/16. The average mean national gender pay gap reported by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in October 2017 was 17.4% for all employees including part-timers and 14.1% for full-time workers. The Council's median average gender pay gap for 2016/17 was 9.9%. This compares to the ONS national median average pay gap of 18.4% for all employees including part-timers and 9.1% for full-time employees.

The gender pay gap is different to equal pay. Equal pay deals with the pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs or work of equal value. It is unlawful to pay people unequally because they are a man or a woman.

New legislation came into force from 31 March 2017, which required private and voluntary sector organisations with 250 or more employees to publish their gender pay gap. The legislation also extends the pay gap information that the Council has to publish and required its submission through a Government site by 30 March 2018. In addition to the mean and median average gender pay gaps, quartile gender pay distributions must be published. The Council's quartile pay distribution data is shown below:

Upper Quartile-	Men 53.20%	Women 46.80%
Upper Middle Quartile	Men 36.70%	Women 63.30%
Lower Middle Quartile	Men 31.10%	Women 68.90%
Lower Quartile	Men 36.30%	Women 63.70%

For staff with a disability, the Council is a "Disability Confident Committed" employer, recognising our commitment to the employment, retention, training and career development of disabled employees. This includes a commitment to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and to consider them on their abilities.

The age profile of the Council's staff in respect of the number of employees under 21 has been improved by the taking on of two apprentices who started in September 2016 and who



have since been taken on as permanent employees. It is planned to take on a number of further apprentices over the next three years.

## **Equality and Diversity Training**

All recent new starters at the Council have received equality and diversity training. This has had an emphasis on understanding unconscious bias. All staff are also required to complete an equality and diversity on-line training module.

## **Equality Impact Assessments**

The Council completes impact assessments where there are major changes to a service area or new policies. The assessments identify opportunities to promote equality and the barriers to services/differential impact on the protected groups in Mid Sussex. Assessments have been completed in 2017 for:

- Economic Development Strategy
- District Plan Modifications
- Expansion of the use of Fixed Penalty Notices
- Amendments to the Housing Allocation Scheme

All of the completed impact assessments are published on the Council's website and can be found at <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/my-council/about-the-council/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessment/>

There is also a standard section in all of the Council's reports to Members, which assesses the "Equality and Customer Services Implications" of the actions referred to in the report.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND LOOKING FORWARD TO THE YEAR AHEAD**

This report includes many examples of how the Council, working with its partners, is providing for the needs of the protected groups in the District and addressing arising from where people live and their income or skill level.

The Council will be looking to further develop its equality and diversity work in the year ahead. Specific areas for development in 2018 include:

- Expansion of the Council's Dementia awareness work through the established groups.
- Completion of the refurbishment of the Skate Park at Victoria Park, Haywards Heath and holding of a Skatefest event.
- Holding a Skatefest event at Court Bushes, Hurstpierpoint as part of engagement with local residents to improve the area.
- Improving recreational facilities for the Stone Quarry estate at East Grinstead.
- Helping our disabled residents to live independently in their own homes by implementing a new model for awarding more disabled facility grants
- Delivering further enhancements to the accessibility of Council buildings, including new Changing Places standard toilet facilities at The Orchards, Haywards Heath and as part of the pavilion enhancement at World's End Recreation Ground, Burgess Hill.
- Launching an improved and more accessible Council website.
- Implementing a Heat 4 Health and Food Bank Project to support older people and young families identified to be in fuel poverty.
- Further work with partner organisations especially Housing Associations and the Department of Work and Pensions to assist vulnerable residents with the roll out of Universal Credit in Mid Sussex in June 2018.