



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 (HAMSVa); 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. HAMSVa 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 Downslink 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.