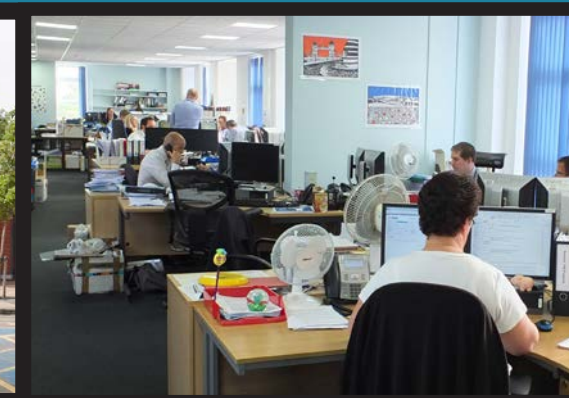


Mid Sussex Economic Development Strategy



2018 - 2031



Contents Page

FOREWORD BY THE CABINET MEMBER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

Page 1

2. CONTEXT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
(Policy/strategic/business)

Page 3

2.1 Economic Profile

2.2 Policy Context

2.3 Overview of the District

3. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Page 19

4. VISION

Page 20

5. STRATEGIC PRIORITY: PLACES

Page 21

6. STRATEGIC PRIORITY: PREMISES

Page 26

7. STRATEGIC PRIORITY: PEOPLE

Page 29

8. STRATEGIC PRIORITY: PROMOTION

Page 35

9. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Page 38

10. MONITORING

Page 40

APPENDIX 1. DETAILED ACTION PLAN 2018 - 2023

Foreword by Councillor Jonathan Ash-Edwards, Deputy Leader of Mid Sussex District Council and Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Growth.

Mid Sussex is already amongst the most economically successful districts in the country. Our location, excellent connectivity, diverse and resilient business sectors, high numbers of start-ups, a skilled workforce and excellent quality of life all combine to make Mid Sussex an ideal place to do business and create some of the lowest unemployment rates nationally.

However, in recent years the rate of growth of the district's economy and productivity has not matched the pace of some other parts of the country. We still have more to do to maximise the economic potential of our towns and villages. Local businesses tell us that there is a need for more and better quality business premises to grow into. Too many residents need to commute out of the district to earn salaries commensurate with local house prices. Our digital connectivity needs improvement to support all businesses and especially the growth of technology-led businesses, and the high value jobs they bring. We need to continue to work with our partners to ensure that local people have the right skills and expertise for a rapidly changing labour market. Finally, we want to do more to promote Mid Sussex as a destination for inward investment.

Our Economic Development Strategy sets out our desire to make sure that Mid Sussex fulfils its full potential as a vibrant and attractive place for businesses and people to grow and succeed.

The scale of our ambition is significant – thousands of new jobs, town centre redevelopment, new business parks, major infrastructure upgrades, a Science and Technology Park, initiatives to promote STEM skills and improving how the Council supports and promotes inward investment and economic growth.

We also recognise that growth needs to be economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable. With that in mind, preserving the distinctive character of our towns and villages, and protecting and making the most of the district's rich natural assets are values that run throughout the Strategy.

The Strategy presents the four priority themes which provide structure for our ambition and which will be our focus from now up to 2031. It also sets out the practical actions that we will be taking with our partners over the next five years to ensure that Mid Sussex fulfils its potential as a thriving and growing part of the regional and national economy.



Executive Summary

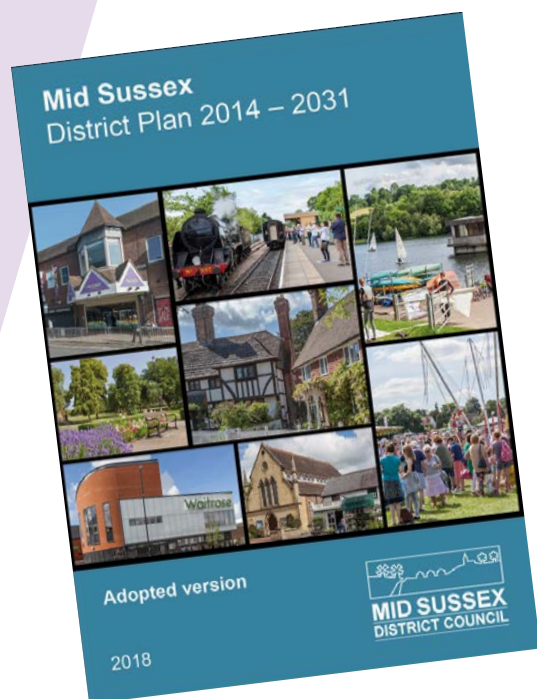
Our Vision is to make Mid Sussex a vibrant and attractive place for businesses and people to grow and succeed.

This Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan has been developed in collaboration with our strategic and local partners and seeks to ensure delivery of the key corporate objective of securing sustainable economic growth. It is also a key delivery tool for the District Plan (2014-2031).

The Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan support the Government's national ambition for economic growth set out in the Industrial Strategy, as well as the regional aspirations articulated in the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), and the County Council's West Sussex Plan for 2017-2022.

The Priority Themes underpinning the Vision focus on places, premises, people and promotion. Taken together these Themes set out the priority activities through which we will realise our Vision for a vibrant and growing Mid Sussex.

The Action Plan explains in more detail the specific commitments and actions to be delivered over the next 5 year period.



Priority theme 1. Place

In realising our vision for Place, we aim to deliver:

- Viable and vibrant town and village centres with their own identity which meet the retail, leisure and employment needs of the growing population.
- Business parks which provide an attractive environment which secures the retention and relocation of new businesses into Mid Sussex
- Infrastructure improvements which meet business needs, including widening the A2300 and delivery of £13.6 million sustainable transport infrastructure improvements.



Priority theme 2. Premises

In realising our vision for Premises, we aim to ensure:

- An excellent supply of quality industrial and office space to meet the needs and demand across the District.
- An employment offer which is complementary to that elsewhere in West Sussex County Council, including delivery of new business units on the Northern Arc Business Park.
- The development of centres of excellence and clusters of specialist industries to facilitate retention, growth and inward investment into the District by these sectors, including the development of a programme to secure delivery of the Science and Technology Park.
- An increase in the number of high gross value added jobs in the District.
- The development of hotel and conference facilities to meet the needs of visitors and business community, including the delivery of mid-range hotels in Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath.

Priority theme 3. People

In realising our vision for People, by working with an influencing partners we aim to:

- Ensure residents have access to opportunities to develop the skills to succeed, including working with partners at County level and across the education sector, and working to increase the number of local residents securing qualifications at level NVQ 2 and above and NVQ level 4 and above, and increasing 6th form places and apprenticeship places
- Ensure education and training providers are aware of the skills required to access jobs in the growing employment sectors and provide the courses to deliver this
- Work with education and training providers to ensure there is provision of further education and higher education in the District
- Ensure businesses can access robust and effective advice and support for their stage of growth, including start-ups and scale-up businesses
- Support and encourage local business growth through the provision of Council services and awarding of Council contracts
- Improve workplace health, increasing the number of workplaces and employees to engage with the wellbeing service.

Priority theme 4. Promotion

In realising our vision for Promotion, we aim to ensure:

- The benefits of the economic strategy are maximised by promoting the District's advantages clearly and widely, encouraging business retention and growth and appropriate inward investment.
- The potential for growth in the Mid Sussex visitor economy is maximised, making the most of the District's world class natural assets to increase staying visits and visitor spend, and to grow employment in the tourism sector.



1. Introduction

The Mid Sussex Economic Development Strategy (The Strategy) sets out a vision for how Mid Sussex should develop between now and 2031 in order to ensure a thriving and sustainable economy. The Strategy also features a detailed Action Plan to be updated every five years which sets out the specific activities that we will undertake and the outcomes those actions will deliver. Through the Action Plan we will make significant steps forward in taking Mid Sussex its journey towards our vision for 2031.

Securing strong and sustainable economic growth for the district is one of four strategic priorities for Mid Sussex, the others being the delivery of effective and responsive services, strong and resilient communities, and financial independence. This demonstrates the importance that we attach to economic growth and the commitment that we will show in making sure the district's potential is realised.

The Strategy reflects our aspirations for positive development shaped by the views and needs of local people to help communities maintain a high quality of life, increase economic prosperity and protect the environment. The Strategy describes how we will work to meet current needs of our community and create a vibrant and modern Mid Sussex that future generations can continue to take pride in. The Strategy is a key delivery tool for our District Plan.

We have consulted widely with the business community and strategic and local partners to shape this Strategy. Their aspirations and concerns have shaped our overall Vision and the Action Plan.

The Strategy and Action Plan are informed by the demographic and economic evidence set out in our Economic Profile which can be accessed here <insert URL>.

Key partners we have consulted include:

- Our regional and sub-regional partners, including West Sussex County Council, the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership, and the Gatwick Diamond Initiative



- The Town Councils for Burgess Hill, East Grinstead, and Haywards Heath



- The District's Parish Councils

- Neighbouring district, town, and city local authorities including Tandridge District Council, Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Wealden District Council, Lewes District Council, and Brighton and Hove City Council



- Our three local business associations: Burgess Hill Business Parks Association, East Grinstead Business Association, and Haywards Heath Business Association



- A range of local businesses

- Universities



- Local property agencies

- Sussex Chamber of Commerce



2. Context for economic development



2.1. Economic Profile

An economically successful district

Mid Sussex is an attractive and affluent district in West Sussex in the South East of England with a total population of 147,100.

It is an ideal location to deliver economic success, given its position between London and the coast and proximity to Gatwick airport. There are excellent transport links by road and rail, good access to the South Coast ferry ports and to Gatwick International Airport.

The District is within the Gatwick Diamond, an economic partnership consisting of the local authorities surrounding Gatwick and the Greater Brighton Economic Board, a partnership of local authorities and businesses in Brighton and the surrounding area. Mid Sussex is also part of the Coast to Capital (C2C) Local Economic Partnership (LEP), which is committed to growing the economy of the area and creating jobs.

The Mid Sussex economy is diverse and is home to a number of innovative and nationally known businesses with a third of businesses in the professional, scientific and technical, and information and communication sectors. There is a range of smaller businesses across sectors such as finance, service industries and light manufacturing. The Mid Sussex area has approximately 7,300 businesses. Over 85 per cent of these employ fewer than 10 people with the majority employing fewer than five employees. The District continues to see a high number of business start-ups each year and it is a resilient economy, with survival rates better than the South East average.

The district is home to many successful and growing world-class technology-led businesses. Examples include:

- Edwards Vacuum Solutions, based on the Victoria Business Park in Burgess Hill, is the world leader in the manufacturing and supply of industrial vacuum systems and abatement solutions. Edwards is a key supplier to a range of global technology industries including manufacturers of scientific instruments, flat panel displays, LEDs, and microelectronic devices including semiconductors.
- Cells 4 Life, the UK's leading and largest stem cell bank. The core service offers therapies for many incurable diseases, such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and diabetes. Cells 4 Life have led global innovation in their field
- Stabilitech are a leading innovator in biotechnology, developing new methods for the production of next-generation vaccines. Emergent products include a ground-breaking new approach to vaccination which enhances immunity to Zika virus.



The District is consistently ranked highly on quality of life measures, and is consistently listed as one of the 20 best places to live in the country. There are high levels of employment and the educational standard of the local population is well above average. Crime levels are low, health levels are generally good, and there is a strong sense of community.

Our Economic Profile [<insert URL>](#) represents a key part of the evidential base which informs and supports the identification of the key themes in this Strategy and the specific outcomes and actions for the next five years as set out in our Action Plan. The Profile provides a more detailed analysis of the economic strengths and opportunities across the region, and sets out some of the business intelligence and insight that has informed the Strategy.

Funding economic growth

Our principal focus in local economic development is in attracting private investment. Examples of our successes in doing that are set out in the following sections. However, there is also an important role for public funding in development, in particular in unlocking development sites and helping fund supporting infrastructure.

The majority of public funding available to support growth and development in the local economy and in employment is channelled through a range of national, regional and sub-regional agencies. The Government has introduced a series of policy initiatives and legislative changes designed to assist economic growth. We actively engage with the agencies responsible for administering these funds and take a pro-active role in maximising any public funding available to support development across the district.

The main public funding channels for stimulating economic growth are:

- Local Enterprise Partnerships

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are private/public sector partnerships that have a clear remit to drive sustainable private sector led growth. Mid Sussex is part of the Coast to Capital (C2C) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), which consists of the London Borough of Croydon, East Surrey, Gatwick Diamond, Brighton & Hove, Lewes and West Sussex

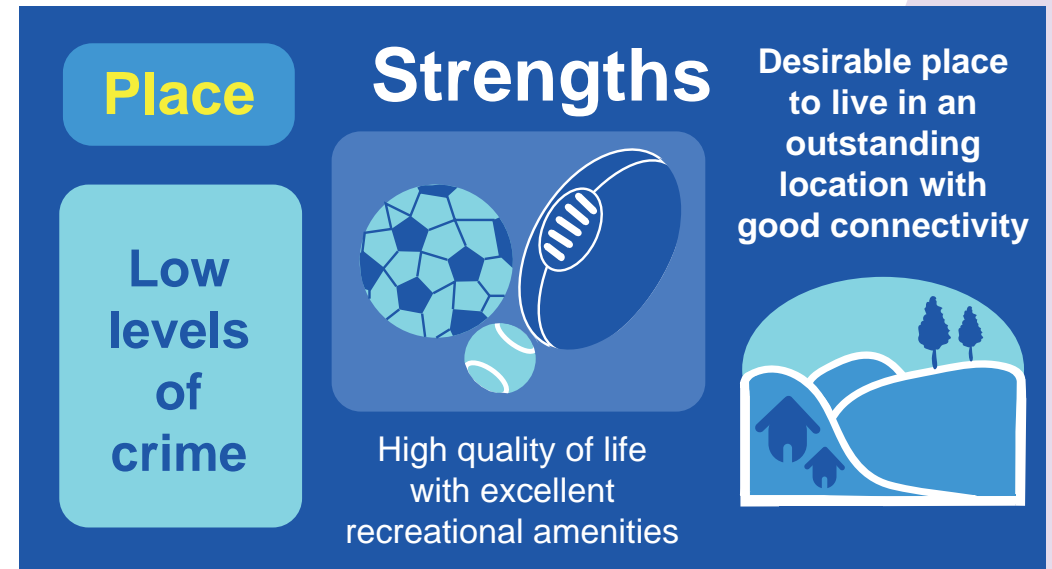
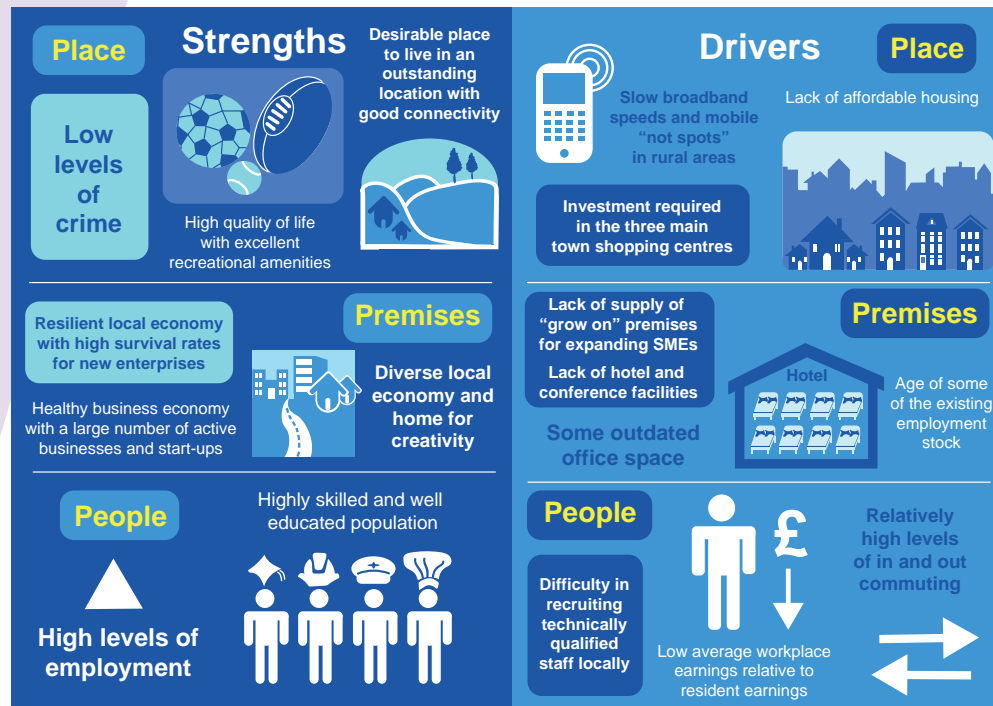
Central Government Housing Infrastructure fund

The £5 billion Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) is a government capital grant programme to help unlock new homes in areas with the greatest housing demand. Infrastructure funding of up to £10 million is offered to enable additional sites to be allocated or existing sites unblocked quickly

- Local Growth Fund

The Local Growth Fund (LGF) is government funding awarded to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) for projects that benefit the local area and economy. Funds awarded through the LGF support investment in infrastructure, flood defences, major transport schemes, international trade and business support.

Mid Sussex District Council has been successful in bidding for significant HIF and LGF funding, explained in more detail in the strategic priority sections of this Strategy (sections 5-8).



2.2. Policy context

National policy context

Whilst the Strategy has a strong local and regional focus, it also takes account of and responds to national policy imperatives, recognising the important role the district plays in the wider economy.

Industrial Strategy

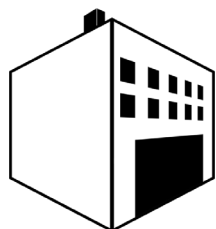
In November 2017 Government published its Industrial Strategy White Paper; 'building a Britain fit for the future.' The White Paper identifies 'Five Foundations' of productivity that the White Paper describes as being 'the essential attributes of every successful economy'. These five foundations align to Government's vision for a transformed national economy, and focus on Ideas, People, Infrastructure, Business Environment, and Places.

Mid-Sussex today is in particularly strong position to contribute to these national challenges. Our four Themes of Place, Premises, People, and Promotion align to the Industrial Strategy, and the outcomes we seek to deliver stand to make a valuable contribution to the Government's ambitions.

Place



People

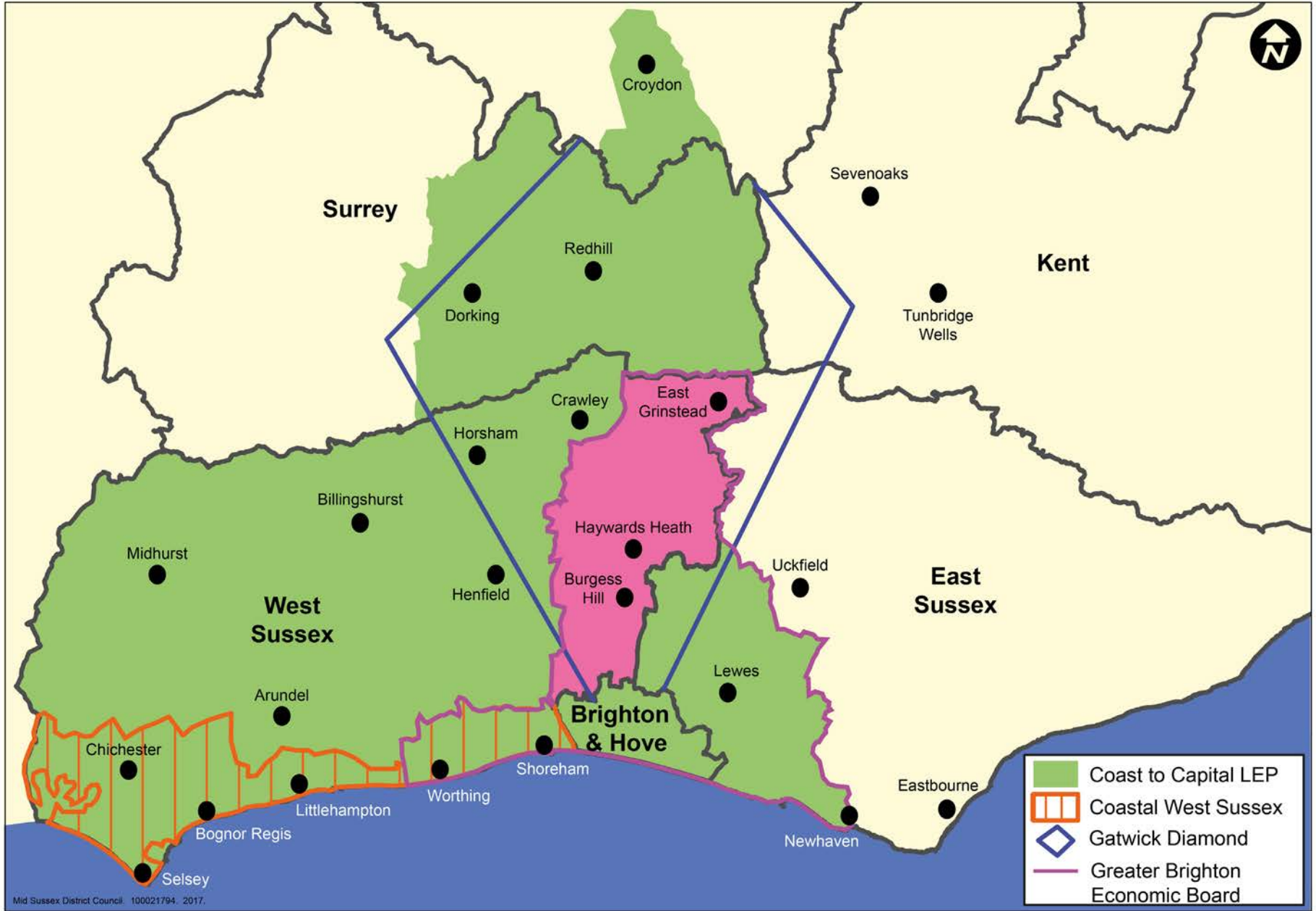


Premises



Promotion

Geographies of regional policy partners



West Sussex County Council

West Sussex County is home to some 850,000 residents. West Sussex County Council's (WSCC) plan for 2017-21 focuses on five priorities for the County:

- Giving children and young people the best start in life
- Ensuring West Sussex is a prosperous place
- Strong, safe and sustainable communities
- Supporting independent living for older people
- Working for local communities.



West Sussex County Council is currently refreshing its economic strategy and work has taken place to ensure that the two strategies align closely.

The County Council is a key partner. Many of our strategically important economic development projects involve significant road and other infrastructure improvements where the County Council have lead responsibility. We continue to work closely with the County Council to ensure that those infrastructure developments come forward at a pace that matches our ambition for the district.

Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership

The Coast to Capital mission is:

“ to provide joint public and private sector leadership to drive sustainable private sector led growth and job creation across an area reaching from Brighton & Hove to Croydon and including the Gatwick Diamond and West Sussex. We will do this by boosting enterprise and embedding an even stronger enterprise culture. We will also increase international trade by helping current international traders to trade more and inspiring more businesses to trade internationally. In so doing we will realise every person and place's potential.”



The LEP's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) was published in July 2014. It set out Coast to Capital's ambitions for sustainable economic growth with stretching outcome targets - 60,000 jobs, 26,000 additional homes and 970,000m² of employment space by 2021.

In 2014, through the SEP, Coast to Capital made a business case to Government and were awarded a £202 million Growth Deal to boost skills, drive innovation, provide targeted business support and improve infrastructure through the delivery of over 40 projects across the area. In January 2015 an expansion of £36 million of Local Growth Funding was announced taking the total of projects funded to over 50.

Coast to Capital are currently working on a refresh of their SEP. That refresh will focus on the latest Growth Deal request to Government (Growth Deal 3) which prioritises business and enterprise; regeneration; skills; transport and infrastructure.

Gatwick Diamond

The Gatwick Diamond Initiative is a business-led partnership, with a focus on key strategic issues for the business community across the whole diamond area. Mid Sussex falls entirely within the Gatwick Diamond area. Gatwick Diamond Initiative works with business leaders, business membership organisations, colleges and universities, local authorities, and government agencies to address the needs of the area to ensure it is a world-class place to live, work and do business.

A key part of the Gatwick Diamond's mission is to promote the area's strengths and highlight strategies for the predominant sectors that drive the local economy. With that in mind Gatwick Diamond are a key partner that Mid Sussex District Council works with as part of a strategic approach to economic development, and in particular to attract inward investment to the District.

Through the Gatwick Diamond Initiative, Mid Sussex is one of seven local authorities only to be listed below who have jointly agreed a Local Strategic Statement (LSS) to provide a framework for co-operation on strategic planning and development issues. The LSS:

- Supports a shift in the structure of the economy with a focus on businesses which require higher skill levels, on entrepreneurship and enterprise.
- Identifies the need for interventions to address perceived weaknesses in the Diamond's economy, including low skills base, availability of high quality sites and premises, opportunities for small businesses and startups and transport infrastructure.



- Recognises the need for housing growth to support the labour market needs of an expanding economy if there is not to be a significant increase in longer distance commuting.
- Notes that, given the strength of Crawley/Gatwick as a business location and the concentration of demand there, this area is expected to be the main focus for economic development. Business development in other locations is likely to reflect the attributes of smaller settlements and support local communities rather than providing strategic employment growth.

The partner organisations with whom Mid Sussex District Council has agreed the LSS are: Surrey County Council, West Sussex County Council, Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Mole Valley District Council and Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.



Northern West Sussex Functional Economic Market Area

Taken together, the three Northern West Sussex local authorities of Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council and Mid Sussex District Council make up the Northern West Sussex Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA). The three districts share a number of common characteristics and important linkages with other sub-regions, especially in terms of commuting and transport connectivity. We work with partners in the FEMA on particular matters linked to employment land and options for further growth.

Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area

Within the Gatwick Diamond area, the three West Sussex local authority areas of Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex form the 'Northern West Sussex' area. The 2009 West Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA) identified two distinct housing market areas in the County, the Northern West Sussex HMA and the Coastal HMA, and this is confirmed in the Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Assessment (February 2015). The authorities in West Sussex have been working broadly within these two groupings and the Northern West Sussex authorities have collaborated on housing and economic evidence to inform their respective local plans.

Greater Brighton City Deal

Brighton is the closest major city to Mid Sussex, and economic links to the city and neighbouring coastal areas are key. In October 2013 the Council signed up to the Greater Brighton City Deal, which covers the administrative areas of Brighton & Hove, Lewes, Mid Sussex, Adur and Worthing Councils. The City Deal identifies a number of growth areas including support for the development of the Business and Science Parks at Burgess Hill. A Greater Brighton Economic Board has now been established with Mid Sussex District Council represented by the Council's Leader.

The City Deal seeks to:

- “To build on the success of Brighton’s creative-tech cluster, and help its many small businesses translate their success onto a larger scale;
- To unlock growth across other areas of the City Region outside Brighton, by giving private sector investors the confidence and space they need to invest;
- To create effective governance structures for Greater Brighton, so that local authorities, businesses and universities across the City Region can work together in a seamless fashion”.



Local policy context

Corporate Plan

Mid Sussex District Council sets out four corporate priorities in its Corporate Plan and Budget 2018/2019:

- Effective and responsive services
- Sustainable economic growth
- Strong and resilient communities
- Financial independence.

Within 'Sustainable economic growth', flagship activities for 2018/2019 include progressing the town centre redevelopment at Burgess Hill, working towards the provision of new business parks at Burgess Hill and providing economic development grants to support business.

District Plan 2014 - 2031

Policy DP 2 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2031 seeks to make provision for an average of 543 additional jobs in the District per year. It allocates 25 hectares of land as a high quality business parks at Burgess Hill, makes provision for further sites to be identified within the Site Allocations DPD, and notes that the Coast to Capital Strategic Economic Plan identifies land to the west of Burgess Hill to support a new Science and Technology Park.

The Policy seeks to ensure the effective use of employment land and encourages Neighbourhood Plans to identify the needs of local businesses and their local residents for employment opportunities and any areas requiring economic regeneration, and to allocate sufficient land within towns and villages to meet these needs.

Policy DP 3 of the District Plan supports the regeneration, renewal and environmental enhancement of the three town centres: Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath.

The District Plan Policy DP 4 provides support for development which will help to maintain the range of shops and services to enable village centres to meet local needs.

A number of the 'made' Neighbourhood Plans also make provision to ensure the economic vitality of their towns and villages. Some examples are set out below:

