



MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

Equality and Diversity Progress Report 2018

INTRODUCTION

This is the Council's ninth 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; sex; gender reassignment; sexual orientation; religion or belief; age; pregnancy and maternity; marriage and civil partnership.

In addition to considering the needs of those with protected characteristics, our Equality and Diversity Scheme and this progress report looks at disadvantage arising from income or skill level and by virtue of where people live. Also included in this progress report is information about the Council's work to support the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

PROGRESS IN DELIVERING SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS IN 2018

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

Figures for Hate Crimes reported in Mid Sussex for the last two years are shown below:

Type of Hate Crime	Year to January 2018	Year to January 2019
Transgender	4	8
Religion	9	7
Disablist	11	10
Sexuality	13	17
Race	61	77
Other*	3	16
Total Hate Crime Motivators	101	135

+ Hate "Other" has only been included since June 2017

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. 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 across the County 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.

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. Overall in 2017/18 a total of £437,088 of Economic, Community Development and Facility Grants were awarded from the Council's grants budget, attracting an estimated further £2,430,505 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; Age UK; Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (MSVA); 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, with grants of £231,244 awarded in 2017/18..

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 over 10,000 enquiries in Mid Sussex. The top advice categories were benefits and tax credits (33%); housing (14%); employment (13%); relationships and family (12%); and debt (10%).
- 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.
- Mid Sussex Voluntary Action support local charities, volunteers, community groups, non-profit organisations and social enterprises. MSVA 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 has continued 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 concessional 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 2017/18, concessionary attendances amounted to 34% of the total. The Leisure Centres also work through the GP Exercise Referral Programme and provide activities for local schools and community groups.

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. The services provided by the Hub are of particular benefit to vulnerable groups, for example in addressing issues associated with an ageing population, fuel poverty and support for carers. 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 in October provided a Living Well Event for Older People at the Dolphin Centre, in partnership with Places for People and the Alzheimer's Society. The Event united against dementia and gave the opportunity to learn more about staying fit and well in later life. Other charities, voluntary groups and local organisations were on hand to provide free wellbeing health checks and free audiology testing.
- The Wellbeing Team also provided a Health Event in Lindfield in October, which provided workshops to promote good mental health.

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 Keeping Warm and Accessing Support; Community Funding; Advocacy and Mental Health: and Housing Support Opportunities.

FOCUSED WORK AROUND PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS IN 2018

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 2018 included:

- The Council's Housing Standards Team provided 91 Disabled Facilities Grants during 2017/18. 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. A further 95 have been awarded in the period April to December 2018.
- New inclusive playground equipment has been installed in the Fry Crescent area of Burgess Hill. The equipment allows all children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities to be active.
- Disabled Parking Accreditation for Mid Sussex car parks - fifteen of the Council's car parks have been awarded Disabled Parking Accreditation by Disabled Motoring UK. This means the car parks meet strict criteria for the provision of spaces, accessibility and clear enforcement of disabled bays.
- 2 wheelchair accessible new affordable housing units have been provided in 2017/18 and a further one in the period April to December 2018.
- The Council's Licensing Team prosecuted a private hire driver who denied a visually impaired customer access to his vehicle because they had a guide dog with them. This is an offence under the Equality Act 2010. Following this case, taxi drivers have been required to undertake disability awareness training.
- A hackney carriage unmet demand survey has been carried out, which found that there is adequate hackney carriages availability in the District and sufficient wheelchair accessible vehicles.
- The Council provides taxi vouchers, which is a discretionary service for Mid Sussex residents who suffer from a disability or have restricted mobility and are unable to use a bus pass for concessionary travel. In 2017/18 there were 131 users of the scheme at a cost of £2,770.
- Mental Health Week – the Wellbeing Team worked with Burgess Hill Town Council, Sussex Oakleaf and Mid Sussex CVS to provide a series of free events to mark Mental Health Week 14 – 20 May.
- The Council awarded a grant to the national charity Fixers for a scheme to tackle mental health issues in the District.
- Grants have been awarded to local groups that promote the interests of people with disabilities, including Disability Access; the Grace Eyre Foundation for people with learning difficulties; Sign Health service for young deaf people; 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.

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 over 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 2018 included:

- Twelve Silver Sunday events, funded by the Council, were held across the District 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.
- 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 includes an on-line version, which allows groups to keep their service information up to date <http://www.community-connections.org.uk/>
- A Living Well with Dementia Day was held on 14 October at the Dolphin Leisure Centre, organised by the Wellbeing Team in partnership with Places for People, the local Dementia Action Alliance and Alzheimers Society.
- 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 Orchards Shopping Centre is part of the Haywards Heath Dementia Action Alliance and has achieved the status of “Dementia Friendly Haywards Heath.” The centre management team, along with many retailers have become Dementia Friends, which enables them to feel more confident in dealing with customers who become confused or disorientated in the centre and town.

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 Cabinet members are in post for 2 years.

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. Issues discussed at meetings of the Better Young Lives Group have included addressing drugs related crime involving young people in County Lines and Cuckooing.

Specific action in 2018 included:

- The sixth annual play day events were held in parks at Burgess Hill, East Grinstead, Haywards Heath and Hurstpierpoint. The theme of this year’s events was “beside the seaside” and included all the rides, games and creative activities inspired by the traditional British beach holiday. Activities included donkey rides, Punch and Judy shows, bouncy castle, helter skelter, face painting, arts and crafts and circus skills. 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 4,600 local children and their families.
- The fifth 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; Peer nominated and the Chairman’s Special award.

- A Skatefest event was provided at Court Bushes Recreation ground, Hurstpierpoint in February as part of an afternoon of sport and recreational activities.
- The new skate park at Victoria Park in Haywards Heath was formally opened in March. The design of the park has been informed by the skater community and is suitable for all ages, abilities and disciplines.
- The Council held a Dragon's Den STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Challenge involving local schools to design and market an electric bike.
- A grant was provided to Fixers Public Health Broadcasting Trust for a youth and mental health project.
- Free creative arts workshops for young people were held in July in song writing, song production, dance, physical theatre and creative writing.
- A grant of £698 was provided to Ashurst Wood Youth Club to purchase a multi-use games table.
- The Council hosted a Young Democracy Event which welcomed pupils from Haywards Heath and Lindfield so they could learn more about democracy and how Councils work.

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.
- As a result of relationships built whilst attending the English Conversation classes, participants set up a community group (Mid Sussex Multicultural Group) and received West Sussex County Council funding to deliver Children's English support classes and Women's Mediation classes.

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 taken forward alongside the District Plan.
- The Council continues to manage the Bedelands site at Burgess Hill, which provides 9 plots for Gypsies and Travellers.

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. 162 food vouchers were issued by the Housing Needs Team in the period January to December 2018, compared to 99 in the previous year.
- 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.

Sex

- A grant was awarded to the Mid Sussex Active for their “Girls Get Active” programme to enable 240 young girls at risk of becoming disengaged with exercise to take part in activities.
- Walking Netball sessions have been provided at The Triangle in Burgess Hill. These are primarily aimed at getting women, back into exercise, but are also available for men to attend.
- The Walking Football Scheme for men over 50 has been well attended. There have also been some men only Weight off Workshops provided. The proportion of male clients of the Wellbeing Team over the year was 31%.
- A grant was awarded to the Hurstpierpoint Festival for the delivery of a graffiti workshop at Court Bushes skate park, with the theme of peace and gender equality.

Men and Women Suffering Domestic Abuse

An important aspect of our service provision related to the protected characteristic of sex 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 2018 to 975 crimes compared to 825 crimes in 2017. This is seen as an indication of the success of measures to encourage the reporting of domestic abuse and accessing support.

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 40 requests for housing advice in cases involving a violent breakdown of relationship with a partner in 2017/18, compared to 43 cases in the previous year. There is a cross-tenure outreach service 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.

Gender Reassignment

- 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. 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).

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

- A grant was awarded to Ashenground Community Centre, Haywards Heath for outdoor games as part of their Open afternoon in July.
- 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.
- A grant was awarded to Maple Drive Community Group, Burgess Hill towards the cost of their Summer Fayre.

Community facilities

- The Council has worked with Hurstpierpoint Parish Council to provide a Hurstpierpoint Community Hub at the former site of the Ex-Serviceman's Club at Court Bushes Recreation Ground. The new community building will be a flexible space that can be used in different ways by local community groups. Resident and community representation will inform the management and governance of the building requirements in order to ensure maximum community benefit to the local community.
- Improvements are being delivered to the play facilities at World's End Recreation Ground, Burgess Hill informed by consultation with the local community completed over the summer.
- Consultation has been undertaken to inform the facilities to the community hub facilities to be provided at the Keymer Brick and Tile Community Building in Burgess Hill..
- Crawley Down Community Centre Association (Haven Centre) were provided with a grant towards CCTV and hall refurbishments. This is a multi-purpose community centre providing a venue for many groups and organisations.
- Positive discussions have taken place with Stone Quarry Crew, Clarion Futures Housing and West Sussex County Council's community development team to develop a proposal for a community recreational space at Spring Copse, Stone Quarry in East Grinstead.

Housing Initiatives

- New affordable housing delivered in 2017/18 included 62 homes outside of the three main towns. These included schemes at Lindfield, Crawley Down, Pease Pottage, Hurstpierpoint, Ansty and Pyecombe. Since April 2018, a further 14 have been delivered in more rural areas through a scheme at Little Park Farm, 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 42 NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training) young people in Mid Sussex at October 2018.

- 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. This provided mentoring support, with 29 young people supported in the first nine months of the year, of which 13 have gone into education, employment or training.
- Your Energy Sussex has provided a switching scheme designed to help people switch to energy suppliers that are more economical and to promote sustainable energy.
- 97 new affordable housing units were delivered in 2017/18, 65 for rent and 32 shared ownership. A further 71 new affordable homes have been delivered in the period April to December 2018.
- The Council's Benefits Service and Housing Needs Team worked with the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) and local voluntary organisations to prepare for the roll out of Universal Credit in the District last June. The Council has allocated DWP grant funding to deliver Personal Budgeting Support and Assisted Digital to Citizens Advice to provide support to vulnerable Universal Credit claimants.

Support for the Armed Forces Community

Mid Sussex District Council signed the Armed Forces Community Covenant in September 2014, which is a statement of mutual support between the District Council and the local Armed Forces community. The Council also received the Bronze Employer Recognition Scheme award in January 2018, which shows support for the Armed Forces community through its employment policies. Initiatives associated with this have included the adoption of a guaranteed interview scheme for suitably qualified applicants with an armed forces connection and proper recognition in the Council's employment policies of provision for members of the Reserve Forces.

The main Council service that has had contact with veterans, reservists or active members of the Armed Forces is Housing. The Housing Register identifies those with an armed forces connection as they are exempted from the usual requirements to have a local connection. There are currently 5 households on the Register with an armed forces connection and 7 applicants with an armed forces connection have been housed through the Housing Register since June 2017.

The Housing Needs Team are currently working with one rough sleeper who has formerly served in the Armed Forces. He has made a homelessness application and the Council is providing temporary accommodation pending the outcome of his application.

The Council continues to publicise the Heroes Welcome Scheme and there are 12 businesses signed up to the scheme in Haywards Heath. Support has been provided through the Council's Grants Scheme for the Beacons of Light World War One commemorations. Town and Parish Councils were encouraged to light a commemorative beacon as part of the Centenary celebrations with a grant of up to £250. 7 Town and Parish Councils received funding and beacons were lit across Mid Sussex on Remembrance Sunday.

The Council purchased a 6ft Tommy Silhouette from the 'There but Not There' campaign. This is displayed on the wall outside the main reception, where a 2 minute silence was observed by officers and Members.

Councillors took part in wreath laying ceremonies at local churches across Mid Sussex on Remembrance Sunday.

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, sex, 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 2018 the Council had 306 employees, 223 full-time and 83 part-time, with the following profile:

- 125 (41%) are men and 181 (59%) women
- 47% of senior managers (defined as the top 5% of earners) are women
- 20 (6.54%) have identified themselves as disabled
- 10 (3.27%) are from ethnic minority communities
- 6 (2%) are under 21 years of age
- 30 (9.8%) are 21-29
- 61 (19.9%) are 30-39
- 77 (25.2%) are 40-49
- 99 (32.4%) are 50-59
- 33 (10.8%) are over 60.

The Council's gender pay gap in 2017/18 was 6.3% calculated by comparing the mean average male and female employee pay. This compares to 9.2% in 2016/17. The Council's median average gender pay gap for 2017/18 was 11.2%, compared to 9.9% in the previous year. This compares to the ONS national median average pay gap of 17.9% for all employees including part-timers and 8.6% 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 all 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 submit to the Government. 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 49.3%	Women 50.7%
Upper Middle Quartile	Men 40.5%	Women 59.5%
Lower Middle Quartile	Men 37.3%	Women 62.7%
Lower Quartile	Men 37.3%	Women 62.7%

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 additional apprentices. Also, two former apprentices have been taken on as permanent members of staff.

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. Arrangements are in hand for equalities to be included in the induction and training for all new Members following the May 2019 election.

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 2018 for:

- Amendments to the Housing Allocation Scheme
- Voter Identification pilot for local council elections

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 disparities 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 2019 include:

- Expansion of the Play Days to include a mobile outreach play pilot for children and families in targeted areas of the District during the school holidays.
- Setting up a Dementia Friendly Safe Haven in the Council’s main reception for people with dementia and their carers.

- Implementing a Corporate Volunteering Scheme to assist local community groups.
- Setting up a comprehensive affordable warmth offer for residents including a home energy visitor service, with the support of the West Sussex Affordable Warmth Partnership.
- Expansion of the falls prevention programme and provision of a falls prevention roadshow.
- Further development of the Council's work to support the commitments in the Armed Forces Covenant.
- Delivering additional Changing Places public toilets in the District , with new facilities to be provided for the Orchards Shopping Centre, Haywards Heath; World's End Recreation Ground at Burgess Hill and at the new Community Hub at Court Bushes, Hurstpierpoint .