

MID SUSSEX PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT OF: HEAD OF CORPORATE RESOURCES
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Wards Affected: ALL
Key Decision: No
Report to: Scrutiny Committee for Community, Customer Services and Service Delivery
6th October 2021

Purpose of Report

1. This is the annual report on the work of the Mid Sussex Partnership (MSP), which is an overarching partnership of statutory and non-statutory organisations working to improve the quality of residents' lives across the District. The report seeks to provide Members with information on the work undertaken under the umbrella of the MSP in 2020/21 and the programme for the year ahead.

Summary

2. Partnership working between key agencies in Mid Sussex remains strong, with a wide range of key partners engaged in the MSP and its activities. An overview of the work of the MSP is outlined in the report. The MSP Board has continued to focus on the most pressing issues requiring high level, multi-agency work, particularly in the response to and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

3. Recommendations

The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the work of the Mid Sussex Partnership in 2020/21 and endorse the proposed continuing emphasis in the year ahead on the response to and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Background

4. Local Strategic Partnership (LSPs) were introduced nationally over a decade ago to be the 'umbrella' local partnership for an area, helping public, private and voluntary organisations work together to improve the quality of life for their communities.
5. Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) were introduced in the late 1990s and are a statutory requirement to ensure that crime and anti-social behaviour are tackled and reduced in partnership in a given local authority area.
6. Health and Wellbeing Partnerships work together to develop and support initiatives addressing the causes of ill health and to promote healthy and active lifestyles for all residents. West Sussex County Council have a strategic Public Health role and commission District and Borough Councils including Mid Sussex, to provide Prevention and Wellbeing Services on their behalf.
7. The Mid Sussex Partnership forms the District's LSP, CSP and Health and Wellbeing Partnership with the Leader of Mid Sussex District Council acting as the Chair of the MSP Board. Other elected Members with Board membership are the MSDC Cabinet Member for Community, a West Sussex County Councillor, a representative from Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils and Mid Sussex Association of Town Councils. Officer. Other Professional members of the Board include representatives from Sussex Police, Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, West Sussex County Council, NHS West Sussex, Clinical Commissioning Group, Clarion Housing Group and Mid Sussex Voluntary Action.

8. The structure and Terms of Reference of the MSP are reviewed annually, with the review in 2020 establishing three Sub-Groups of Health, Community Safety and Community Resilience reporting into the MSP Board. Membership of the MSP Board was also reviewed with the addition of representation from the education sector through Haywards Heath College.

Scrutinising the Partnership

9. As the democratically elected body for the area covered by the MSP, the Council provides scrutiny for the activities of the Partnership. There is also a statutory function conferred under the Police and Justice Act 2006 for the Council to carry out scrutiny of the District's Community Safety Partnership (CSP), which as stated earlier forms part of the MSP.
10. Scrutiny by this Committee allows the Council to judge the work and the value for money the MSP represents and to decide if involvement in the Partnership helps meet the Council's overall objectives. It also allows the Council to discharge its scrutiny duties as set out in the Police and Justice Act 2006.

Progress with Partnership Activities 2020/21

11. Each year the Partnership agrees priority areas for the following financial year and plans activities around these. The MSP's overall priority for 2020/21 was to contribute to the recovery of Mid Sussex from the pandemic, with priority themes established for each of the Sub-Groups. The priorities are informed by the Strategic Intelligence Assessment (SIA), which is produced annually and provides an evidence base to inform the priorities of the MSP. The SIA brings together data about Mid Sussex from several sources relating to crime and anti-social behaviour; health; children and young people; and housing. The 2019/20 SIA is available on the Mid Sussex Partnership page of the Council's website.
12. In 2020/21 the MSP Board has met virtually on a quarterly basis. The theme of the January 2021 meeting was issues for young people in Mid Sussex arising from the pandemic and the support available. Organisations providing support for young people were represented included Haywards Heath College who gave a presentation on providing inclusive educational services, including their apprenticeships, vocational and support services. The April meeting focused on issues for under-represented groups in the District and including information from Citizens Advice on the Community Champions project with the Council to engage with local minority communities, especially in relation to the pandemic.

Community Safety Sub-Group

13. The MSP's Community Safety Sub-Group includes representatives from Sussex Police; Mid Sussex District Council; Town councils; West Sussex County Council Community Safety Team; a representative from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, Mid Sussex Voluntary Action and a school representative. The Group is co-chaired by the Local Police Inspector and the Council's Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager. Priorities for the Sub-Group in 2020/21 were:
 - Public spaces
 - Young people with a focus on preventative interventions.
 - Hate crime.
 - Fraud – especially countering fraud against vulnerable people.

14. The MSP has contributed to the employment of a Partnership Analyst at West Sussex County Council to prepare an overall report for the Safer West Sussex Partnerships and individual Strategic Intelligence Assessments (SIAs) for each of the County's District and Borough Councils. The Mid Sussex SIA has a focus on crime and analyses data for the calendar year 2020 and will inform the priorities of the Community Safety Sub-Group for the coming year. The SIA is included at Appendix A, with the accompanying data pack at Appendix B. These are also published on the Council website.
15. Levels of crime per 1,000 residents in 2020 remained low in Mid Sussex at 45, which is the second lowest in West Sussex behind Horsham. Crime decreased by 4% compared to 2019, which is partly a reflection of the implications of the pandemic and periods of lockdown, which decreased the opportunities for crime. Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) reported to the Police however increased in Mid Sussex by 60% from the previous year, with Environmental ASB up from 45 in 2019 to 164 in 2020.
16. The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Officers also dealt with more reports of Anti-Social Behaviour with a 55% increase in cases from 171 in 2019 to 265 in 2020. The main causes continue to be neighbour disputes and youth related ASB. Community tensions relating to youth anti-social behaviour and breaches of lockdown rules have been exacerbated by school closures and a lack of other available diversionary activities.
17. Sussex Police have previously invested in additional staff for Mid Sussex, including an increase in neighbourhood policing for each of the three towns, Police Community Supports Officers, a Schools Officer, Rural Coordinator; Rural Officer; and Heritage Crime Coordinator.
18. Countering youth related anti-social behaviour in the District has been a particular focus for the partnership. Interventions to address this issue have come under three strands of work:
 - Providing direct support with identified youths
 - Prevention work in schools
 - Support for parents of teenagers with challenging behaviour.
19. Many of the partnership's interventions in this area have been affected by the pandemic, particularly the lack of access for prevention work in schools due to the lockdowns. Prevention work in schools includes the "Your Life, You Choose" Law Days initiative led by local Magistrates in partnership with the Council, Sussex Police, Victim Support and a specialist Community Interest Company called Directions that run educational workshops with ex-offenders. The workshops feature talks/role play sessions from the Police and the ASB officer on knife crime, drugs and sexting as well as general ASB issues; a role play court scenario led by the Magistrates; a session run by the Magistrates on sentencing; a discussion from an ex-offender about the consequences of getting involved in crime and a session from victim support on the impact on victims. Due to the pandemic, only one school (Imberhorne) was able to take advantage of the initiative in 2020/21. Discussions are currently taking place with all 7 secondary schools within the District to establish the demand to run the days in 2021/22.
20. Work to provide direct support to identified youths is being addressed through the REBOOT programme, using Government funding secured by the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's Office. The programme is designed to identify young people at risk of being drawn into violent crime and to provide them with one-to-one support delivered in partnership with YMCA Downslink Group. The Council's Community Safety Team, in partnership with Sussex Police, have been proactive in making referrals to the programme since its launch. From April 2021, the programme transitioned from the PCC's office to Sussex Police and the youth coaching element delivered by the YMCA ceased. There are still interventions available for young people to divert them away from ASB.

21. A project has been developed with Relate to provide family counselling for children involved in ASB and providing a support mechanism to families. Relate were not able to offer the service during the pandemic and referrals have been low to date. We have recently re-established contact with Relate and will promote the service to Early Help and schools.
22. The installation of new and improved CCTV arrangements in key locations within the District has been a key community safety project for some time. Replacement and additional cameras are of high resolution allowing for crystal clear imaging, real time footage and enhanced zoom capabilities. Following consultation on their location, the 3 Towns CCTV project is delivering installation of five new cameras, one each at the following locations:
 - St Johns Park, Burgess Hill
 - Victoria Park, Haywards Heath
 - King George's Field, East Grinstead
 - Holtye Avenue, East Grinstead
 - Clair Park, Haywards Heath.New cameras and the necessary infrastructure have been installed at all these sites and they are all now operational and transmitting live images to the CCTV suite at Police Headquarters in Lewes.
23. Following concerns about criminal activity and anti-social behaviour in the East Court and Mount Noddy Recreation Ground areas of East Grinstead, a 6-week consultation took place in February and March 2021 on the installation of CCTV cameras. The consultation received 374 responses with 95% in favour of CCTV cameras on each site. Funding for these cameras has been agreed and installation is at 95% completion. They will be operational later in the year.
24. Hate crime in Mid Sussex has sadly shown an increase in 2020, although such crimes constitute a small percentage of the total. There were 113 hate crimes reported in Mid Sussex in 2020, up from 96 in the previous year. This is, in part, due to the greater reporting of such incidents. Racially aggravated and homophobic crimes were the only categories to increase.
25. Community Safety partners continue to monitor and report any Community Tensions within the District. The main issue over the past year has been fly posting and leafletting around anti-vaxxers and Covid deniers. Patriotic Alternative, a far-right group also leafletted areas of Burgess Hill in late 2020 although they have not come to notice in 2021. The Community Safety Sub-Group are planning to work with WSCC's Countering Extremism Team to promote their campaign for Hate Crime Awareness week in October.
26. The Community Safety Sub-Group's priorities for 2021-22 are Anti-Social Behaviour, Young People, Public Spaces and Fraud.

Expansion of the use of powers contained within the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

27. Work to exploit the use of powers contained in the Act to counter some types of persistent Anti-Social Behaviour has continued in 2020/21, including the use of Community Protection Notices (CPNs) and Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs).
28. The MSP's Community Safety Sub-Group allocated funding for the delivery of training in the use of CPNs and Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) for a range of staff from partner organisations to ensure a consistent approach to enforcement. Prior to the CPN, a Community Protection Warning (CPW) is issued. A total of 37 CPWs were issued in 2020. 9 of these were escalated to Community Protection Notice.

29. A Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) is an enforceable form of bylaw with Fixed Penalty Notice powers attached. A breach of the order is immediately criminal in nature and could lead to a fine, and/or confiscation of relevant items and/or a prosecution with custodial sentence. Following the appropriate consultation, a PSPO was approved by the Council in January 2020 to address anti-social vehicle use in Burgess Hill, such as speeding, careless driving and excessive noise. Since the order was put in place, there has been a significant drop in reported incidents. The use of further orders elsewhere in the District is being considered.

Other projects supported by the Community Safety Task Sub-Group in 2020/21

30. The Safe Place project in East Grinstead launched in March 2019. A safe place is a designated public place that supports vulnerable people if they feel scared or at risk while they are out and about. Funding was provided by the MSP for Mid Sussex to sign up as a member on the Safe Place National Network. The initial East Grinstead project included six locations at statutory buildings, cafes, school and community buildings. Relevant staff have received safeguarding training and links made with the Dementia Friendly Towns initiative. The project now has 20 safe places, including the three Town Councils and Oaklands reception at Mid Sussex District Council.
31. Improved arrangements for working with schools in addressing safeguarding issues have been put in place. Bi-Monthly Peer Group Conferences, led by the Council's Community Safety team are held to discuss peer groups or places of concern. These are attended by Sussex Police, local schools, West Sussex County Council's Children's Services and relevant voluntary sector groups working with young people. Mid Sussex District Council and the Police are also meeting with secondary schools on a termly basis to discuss current community safety related issues.

Early Intervention Project

32. In support of the national Troubled Families initiative, the MSP set up the Early Intervention Project in 2011. The project aimed to prevent families from impacting on their communities and putting pressure on the public purse. The project employed an Early Help Professional at Mid Sussex District Council funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office who provided practical, emotional and parenting support to the families worked with.
33. A review of the initiative was considered by the MSP Board and the decision made to cease the project from 1st October 2020, with the Early Help Professional redesignated as Community Projects Officer (Young People). This reflects the growing need for youth related work related to anti-social behaviour and mental health issues. The Officer also leads on the expansion of the Safe Place project and assists the Community Safety Manager in managing the peer group conferences and schools meetings.

Other MSP Funded Projects in 2020/21

34. In addition to the community safety and early intervention activities already referred to, the Mid Sussex Partnership has provided funding for several other projects in 2020/21. These are summarised below:
- **YMCA Positive Placements** – this is a project funded by the Council providing mentoring to young people in Mid Sussex who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs). The annual target is to assist 30 young people to get into employment, education or training. YMCA Positive Placements are the providers of the service and due to the pandemic they have been unable to offer their mentoring support and the project, along with its funding, had to be paused. YMCA Positive Placements is refocusing its mentoring support towards getting young people in their supported accommodation ready for independent living. The project to provide support for NEETS is being reassessed, with the consideration of alternative providers.

- **Targeted Intervention Project** – this provided support for vulnerable families in Mid Sussex in accessing paid support services that they would otherwise not have the means to pay for. The programme was run in partnership with West Sussex County Council's Early Help Service. Support has included sessions for children on the autism spectrum, play therapy and relationship counselling. A review of the project has been undertaken and the MSP Board agreed that it should close on 31st March 2021, concluding that it would be better provided direct through the Early Help Service.

Health Sub-Group

35. The MSP's Health Sub-Group comprises a range of statutory and third sector partners including the Council's Wellbeing Service, CCG, Public Health, Sussex Community NHS Trust and Healthwatch. The Group is chaired by the Council's Community Services Manager. Priorities for the Sub-Group in 2020/21 were to address:
 - Increasing number of older people with dementia.
 - Workplace health – provision of health support and signposting to those of working age.
 - Tackling mental health issues from loneliness and social isolation. In particular children and young people.
 - Promotion of access to health care services for all health-related issues.
 - Health inequalities.
36. Health and Wellbeing issues and updates are considered by the MSP Board, as part of local delivery of the West Sussex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Mid Sussex District Council has since 2011/12, been commissioned by NHS West Sussex and West Sussex County Council to provide a Wellbeing Service with the aim of preventing ill health through the promotion of healthy lifestyles. This is provided through a Wellbeing Hub, based within the Council's Community Services, Policy and Performance Business Unit, which advises and supports people needing or wishing to make improvements to their lifestyle, such as losing weight, taking more exercise, improving their diet, reducing alcohol consumption or stopping smoking.
37. During 2020/21, the Wellbeing service delivered 1,078 interventions, with 92% of those who responded to requests for feedback reporting a health improvement. Due to the pandemic and social distancing requirements, the service has been unable to provide face-to face support, so the number of interventions is down from 2,312 in 2019/20. They were also involved with assisting with the provision of emergency support to those shielding in the District, particularly during the first lockdown.
38. The Wellbeing Team has moved to more virtual and telephone contact, with the development of new programmes in response to the Covid restrictions. These include the Falls Prevention Programme moving to virtual classes; the Better You Virtual Exercise Referral Programme aimed at countering the negative implications of Covid on health inequalities; and provision of free Community Health talks.
39. Activities and interventions delivered by the Health Sub-Group have also been curtailed by the pandemic. The Group has previously funded and helped to deliver a range of partnership events such as Living Well in Old Age organised with the Alzheimer's Society and Better Mental Health with Brighton Housing Trust (formerly Sussex Oakleaf) and Together in Sussex.
40. Further events were planned but had to be postponed because of the Covid-19 pandemic. These included an event organised with the Mid Sussex Older People's Council to provide advice on continuing to live in your home, a Diabetes Screening Event due to be held in East Grinstead and a pilot cancer exercise project working with Places Leisure to fund cancer rehabilitation patients on low or no income to take part in the 12-week exercise programme. It is planned to reschedule these events once the effects of Covid diminish.

41. The Health Sub-Group has acted as an important forum for co-ordinating the health response to the pandemic in Mid Sussex. This has included the supporting of the vaccine rollout in the District and maximising take-up.
42. The Health Group's priorities for 2021-22 are Children & Young People's Mental Health - Supporting Children, Young People & Parents; Older People with Dementia; Workplace Health; Health Inequalities; and Promotion of Access to Health Care Services.
43. This year the Health Sub- Group has been officially recognised by the West Sussex Health and Care Partnership Executive and NHS Integrated Care System (ICS) as the Local Community Network (LCN) for Mid Sussex. In West Sussex the LCNs now form the ground level building blocks to enable partnership activity, along with the three Primary Care Networks in Mid Sussex and 20 PCN's across West Sussex. This approach recognises that District and Broughs (D&B) have oversight of what is going on for their population and becomes the avenue for engagement between D&B geography. This approach provides the new NHS Integrated Care Systems (ICS) with a mechanism that enables them to deal with local complexity and therefore stops the 'one size fits all' approach. It also enables partnership working between Health and all partners at a level and scale that is practical and effective.
44. While this new way of partnership working is in its infancy, we have seen some immediate impact in the Health Sub-Group and Mid Sussex Partnership Board in terms of a new commitment to its membership from the CCG and Public Health partners. Moving forward, it is expected that this new partnership pathway will produce collaborative approaches and resourcing to local health interventions in the District.

Community Resilience Sub-Group

45. The Community Resilience Sub-Group includes Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (MSVA), representatives from the West Sussex County Council Partnerships and Communities Team; Sussex Community Foundation; Clarion Housing Group and Community Services staff from Mid Sussex District Council. The Group is chaired by the Mid Sussex Voluntary Action Chief Executive Officer. The overall purpose of the Sub-Group is to consider community resilience issues across the district where partnership work can add value and implement partnership action to tackle these issues.
46. Priorities for the Group in 2020/21 were:
 - Assistance to the voluntary sector in finding new ways of service provision.
 - Building community resilience and harnessing the growth in community responders developed during the pandemic to support vulnerable people.
 - Addressing the implications of the economic downturn, such as the likely increase in NEETs.
 - Provision for those in need of emergency and housing related support.
 - Addressing rural isolation arising from transport and other issues.
 - Consequences of new housing development.
47. The context for the Group's work has been dominated by the pandemic, which has seen new structures and groups develop to support community resilience within the District, especially to assist those who are shielding. These include the local authority community support network hubs and an exponential growth in local community responders, supporting food supply and distribution to vulnerable people.
48. The Community Resilience Sub-Group over the last year has focused on understanding the changing needs of communities and the Community and Voluntary Sector post Covid. This has included looking to address the increasing demand for some form of community hub to provide shared professional space to support the recovery and growth of the Community and Voluntary sector organisations in Mid Sussex. Also; building community leadership capacity through initiatives such as Community Champions and supporting the changing landscape for volunteering.

49. The Sub-Group's priorities for 2121-22 are: Recovery from the Covid-19 Pandemic and Supporting the Needs of the Voluntary sector; Building Community Leadership Capacity through initiatives such as Community Champions; and Supporting the Changing Landscape for Volunteering.

Priorities for 2021/22

50. The MSP Board reviewed its priorities and projects for 2021/22 at its meeting in July 2021. These are reflected in the revised Terms of Reference and amended priorities for the Sub-Groups referred to previously in this report. It is likely that the Partnership will seek to continue where possible to implement, albeit with adaptation, many of its current projects.
51. New and evolving needs around existing and emerging priorities will need to be considered by the Partnership as a result of the pandemic, including an increased need for support with mental health issues such as loneliness and anxiety, issues faced by young people and support for those facing economic hardship. The July meeting of the MSP Board had a focus on working in partnership for the sustainable recovery of the Mid Sussex economy. This included an update on progress with the development of the Council's Sustainable Economy Strategy and plans for engagement with partners.
52. The review of Terms of Reference and membership has led to the addition of a representative from Action in Rural Sussex on to the MSP Board. This is in recognition of the rural nature of the District and the particular implications of the pandemic for rural communities. The next meeting of the MSP Board on 21st October will have a focus on rural issues including rural crime, community transport and support for rural communities.

Conclusions

53. The Mid Sussex Partnership continues to identify and address the issues for Mid Sussex that require high level, multi-agency work. This report includes many examples of projects that are making a real difference to the wellbeing of residents in the District.

Financial Implications

54. Funding for the MSP comes from several sources, including the Police and Crime Commissioner, an annual revenue commitment of £50,000 from Mid Sussex District Council and money from the 2020/21 Home Office Serious Violence Fund to enhance the local provision of positive activities for young people. This has been used to fund projects through the Community Safety Sub-Group.

Risk Management Implications

55. Partnership working in the support and delivery of the statutory functions of the MSP is functioning well in the District. Key Strategic Risks for this Council identified for 2020/21 included the capacity of West Sussex County Council to support Mid Sussex District Council's ambitions and more recently the impacts of the Covid19 Pandemic.

Equality and Customer Service Implications

56. Many of the projects and initiatives referred to above are specifically aimed at helping protected groups as set out in equalities legislation. Where applicable, these projects and initiatives have been subject to equality impact assessments themselves. Data from these projects and initiatives will feed into the annual Strategic Intelligence Assessment and will be used to help inform decisions on commissioning of projects going forward.

Sustainability Implications

57. None arising directly from this report.

Background Papers

Mid Sussex Partnership [Terms of Reference 2021/22](#)

Mid Sussex Partnership [Strategic Intelligence Assessment 2019/2020](#)

PHE (July 2019) [Place-based approaches for reducing health inequalities: main report](#); Public Health England

The [“Start Well, Live Well, Age Well: West Sussex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019 – 2024”](#) provides a framework which prioritises prevention