

MID SUSSEX PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT OF: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE
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Wards Affected: ALL
Key Decision: No
Report to: Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Deputy Leader and Housing and
Customer Service
21st September 2022

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 2021/22 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 context of the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic in Mid Sussex.

Recommendations

3. **The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the work of the Mid Sussex Partnership in 2021/22.**

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 each 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 has 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 brings all these partnerships together and forms the District's LSP, CSP and Health and Wellbeing Partnership. The Leader of Mid Sussex District Council Chairs the MSP Board. The MSP Board consists of 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. The following other bodies also have officers on the - Sussex Police, Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, West Sussex County Council, NHS West Sussex, Clinical Commissioning Group, Clarion Housing Group, Mid Sussex Voluntary Action and Haywards Heath College.

8. The structure and Terms of Reference of the MSP are reviewed annually, with the review in 2020 establishing three subgroups comprising Community Safety, Health and Community Resilience. Membership of the MSP Board is also regularly reviewed with the addition from 2021 of representatives from Sussex Community Transport and Action in Rural Sussex.

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 evaluate the work and the value for money the MSP represents and to assess whether the Partnership contributes to meeting 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 2021/22

11. Each year the Partnership agrees priority areas for the following financial year and plans activities around these. 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, and community issues. The 2022 SIA is attached at appendix A.
12. The MSP contributes to a Partnership Analyst based at West Sussex County Council who prepares an overall annual report for the Safer West Sussex Partnerships and individual Strategic Intelligence Assessments (SIAs) majoring on community safety data for each of the County's District and Borough Councils. The 2022 SIA for Mid Sussex has yet to be released and will be made available to Members with the accompanying data pack through the Member Information Service. It will also be published on the Council's website.
13. In 2021/22 the MSP Board has met virtually on a quarterly basis, with themed meetings as follows:
 - April 2021 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.
 - July 2021 meeting focused on the sustainable recovery of the Mid Sussex economy including progress with the Council's Sustainable Economy Strategy.
 - October 2021 meeting covered issues for Mid Sussex rural communities, including rural policing, community transport and the work of Action in Rural Sussex.
 - January 2022 meeting covered mental health issues in Mid Sussex, including self-harm and the impact of Covid on young people in schools and mental health support for parents and young people.
 - April 2022 meeting covered the new SIA, digital inclusion and improving public awareness of the role of the MSP's as the Community Safety Partnership.
 - August 2022 meeting covered the cost-of-living crisis and links to the Sustainable Economy Strategy in providing such initiatives as food partnerships and community hubs.

Community Safety Subgroup

14. The MSP's Community Safety Subgroup 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 representative from the District's secondary schools. The Group is co-chaired by the Local Police Inspector and the Council's Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager. Priorities for the Subgroup in 2021/22 were:
 - Anti-social behaviour
 - Public spaces
 - Young people with a focus on preventative interventions.
 - Fraud – especially countering fraud against vulnerable people.
15. Levels of crime per 1,000 residents in 2021 remained low in Mid Sussex at 41.3, which is the lowest in West Sussex. Crime decreased by 8.8% compared to 2020. Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) reported to the Police has also shown an overall reduction of 9%.
16. 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.
17. The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Officers dealt with 260 cases in 2021 compared to 265 in 2020. The main causes continue to be neighbour disputes and youth related ASB. Youth related ASB was exacerbated by the pandemic, including periods of school closures and a lack of other available diversionary activities.
18. Work to exploit the use of powers contained in the Act to counter some types of persistent Anti-Social Behaviour has continued in 2021/22, including the use of Community Protection Notices (CPNs) and Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs). The Community Safety Subgroup 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 17 CPWs were issued in 2021. 6 of these were escalated to Community Protection Notice.
19. Countering youth related anti-social behaviour in the District has continued to be a particular focus for the partnership. Interventions to address this issue have come under three work streams:
 - Providing direct support with identified youths
 - Prevention work in schools
 - Support for parents of teenagers with challenging behaviour.
20. Many of the partnership's interventions in this area were affected by the pandemic, particularly the lack of access for prevention work in schools due to the lockdowns. Prevention work in schools has been able to start up again and has included the "Your Life, You Choose" Law Days initiative led by local Magistrates. These have a focus on anti-social behaviour and crime, and the consequences for both victims and perpetrators. These have been very well received by all involved, with the project delivered to benefit Year 8 students at three Mid Sussex secondary schools, during the Summer term 2022. These were Imberhorne; Sackville; and St Paul's. Discussions are taking place with all the District's secondary schools to establish the demand to run further school law days.

21. A project has been developed with Relate to provide support for parents of teenagers with challenging behaviour. Funding is available to support families of young people involved in ASB to work together to make sustainable changes with relationships and behaviours. Relate were not able to offer the service during the pandemic and its availability is being promoted with Early Help and schools.
22. The partnership supports ASB Awareness Week, which this year had a focus on youth. The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Sussex Police, and the three Town Councils worked together in engagement with young people in the Council's parks during 18th – 22nd July 2022.
23. The MSP is also supporting a project with Sussex Clubs for Young People to enable them to provide youth outreach via their purple bus every Friday at King George's playing field in East Grinstead. The sessions include physical and sporting activities; arts and crafts; and games. The project commenced in June 2022 and initial feedback is positive with a good number of young people attending.
24. As part of the Partnership's work around fraud prevention, Mid Sussex Voluntary Action hosted a fraud awareness forum for local voluntary and community groups in partnership with WSCC's Fraud team and Sussex Police in the Autumn. This was well received.
25. The need for further CCTV cameras at the East Court and Mount Noddy Recreation Ground areas of East Grinstead was identified following concerns about criminal activity and anti-social behaviour in the area. The funding for these cameras has been agreed and installation is 95% completed. Completion is pending the fibre connection by BT which is being managed by the CCTV Manager at Sussex Police. We await a completion date.
26. Hate crime in Mid Sussex has shown an overall decrease in 2021, with 153 reports compared to 166 in 2020. Disability and homophobic hate crimes were the only categories to increase. Community Safety partners continue to monitor and report any Community Tensions within the District and the Community Safety Subgroup have worked with West Sussex County Council's Countering Extremism Team to promote their campaign for Hate Crime Awareness week.
27. The Subgroup has continued to support the expansion of the Safe Place project, first launched in East Grinstead in March 2019. A safe place is a designated public place that supports vulnerable people if they feel threatened or at risk of harm while they are out and about. These include the three Town Councils and Oaklands reception at Mid Sussex District Council. Recent emphasis has been on the promotion of the Safe Space Sussex App launched by the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner. This free app will direct those at risk to available safe spaces nearby where someone can wait until the Police or a trusted contact can reach them, or until they have been able to access any necessary information and advice to keep them safe.
28. The Community Safety Subgroup has decided to keep the same priorities for 2022/23. There will also be a focus on raising public awareness of the activities of the MSP and Sub-Group as the District's Community Safety Partnership.

Health Subgroup

29. The MSP's Health Subgroup 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 Subgroup in 2021/22 were:

- Children and young people's mental health – supporting children, young people, and parents
 - Older people with dementia.
 - Workplace health – provision of health support and signposting to those of working age.
 - Promotion of access to health care services.
 - Health inequalities.
30. The Health Subgroup 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 health related partnership activity. Moving forward it is expected that this new partnership pathway will produce collaborative approaches and resourcing to local health interventions in the District.
31. 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 Team, 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.
32. During 2021/22, the Wellbeing service delivered 1,785 interventions, with 97.5% of those who responded to requests for feedback reporting a health improvement. The service has been able to offer face-to face support that was unable to be provided during the pandemic due to social distancing requirements.
33. Activities and interventions delivered by the Health Subgroup previously curtailed by the pandemic have started to be delivered again. These included a Diabetes Screening event held by East Grinstead and District Lions in September 2021. The objective was to raise the awareness of diabetes as a health issue and potentially diagnose residents, so they can seek support and early remedial action. 280 people attended the event, with 10% referred onto the national prediabetes programme for further support. In addition, Health Watch and Places Leisure provided a free Community event at The Triangle Leisure Centre, Burgess Hill in June 2022 to raise awareness of Health and Wellbeing checks, screening, and provide information. This also provided an opportunity to engage with Places Leisure to understand the activities available to support local people.
34. The Subgroup has funded Mid Sussex Older Peoples Council to host an event to provide advice for people to continue to live in their own home, which it is hoped can be rescheduled. The Health Group has also supported 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.
35. Young people's mental health has been a key area to address for the Subgroup, especially in the context of the disruptions brought by the pandemic. The Subgroup has been working on the Power 4 Parents Project, which aims to create a local information pack for distribution to schools and parents, offering, signposting and engagement. Following this initial engagement phase the project hopes to provide forums and workshops relating to mental health support and activities which are available in the area for young people.
36. The Health Subgroup's priorities for 2022/23 are:
- Cost of living and health implications

- Older people and Independent living
- Working age health – provision of health support and signposting to those of working age
- Tackling key factors contributing to poor mental health

Community Resilience Subgroup

37. The Community Resilience Subgroup includes Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (MSVA), representatives from the West Sussex County Council Partnerships and Communities Team; Sussex Community Foundation; Clarion Housing Group, Community Transport Sussex, Sussex Clubs for Young People and Mid Sussex District Council Community Services. The Group is chaired by the acting Mid Sussex Voluntary Action Chief Executive Officer. The purpose of the Subgroup is to consider community resilience issues across the district where partnership work can add value and implement partnership action to tackle these issues.
38. Priorities for the Subgroup in 2021/22 were:
- Recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and supporting the needs of the voluntary sector
 - Building community leadership capacity through initiatives such as Community Champions
 - Supporting the changing landscape for volunteering.
39. The Community Resilience Subgroup over the last year has focused on understanding the changing needs of communities and the Community and Voluntary Sector post Covid. This has included exploring the development of community hubs in the District. Community hubs provide a public space that bring several community agencies and neighbourhood groups together to offer a range of activities, programs, and services. These can link into sustainable food partnership initiatives through such services as community cafés.
40. The proposed community hubs are in areas of relative deprivation within the District's three towns. These are at Bentswood, Haywards Heath; Stonequarry at East Grinstead, where the hub is moving into expanded accommodation at the Old Post Office, and the Cherry Tree, Burgess Hill. Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (MSVA) are based at the Cherry Tree, which has been provided through the Council following Age UK's move from the building as a day centre.
41. A connected project, Digital Champions programme is being developed by the Subgroup and led by MSVA. This will involve training 15 volunteer Digital Champions across Mid Sussex to go into people's homes and offer bespoke support to individuals who need assistance getting online. It will help them to access health and council services, online shopping, and any other support they might need. It is intended that the training will make use of a refurbished digital suite at the Cherry Tree.
42. The Community Resilience Subgroup this year has been considering what support should be provided to NEETs (young people Not in Education, Employment, or Training) in Mid Sussex, given that the YMCA Downlink Group is no longer able to provide its Positive Placements mentoring project previously commissioned by the MSP. The Community Resilience Subgroup has been investigating the type of support required and alternative provision in the District to provide a specification to appoint a new provider, which is due to commence shortly.
43. The Subgroup's priorities for 2022/23 are:
- Sustainable Food Partnerships and Food Banks
 - Support for community transport

- Addressing digital exclusion and support for Digital Champions
- Encouraging volunteering in the context of numbers no longer available following the pandemic

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

44. An additional function of the MSP in 2022/23 is to provide the governance for the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which succeeds the old European Union structural funds. This is the local delivery of the Government's levelling up agenda, with funding directly allocated to local authorities over a 3-year period. Local authorities are required to work with a range of local and regional stakeholders to develop an Investment Plan, via a local partnership.
45. The draft Investment Plan for the use of the fund was agreed at the meeting of the MSP Board on 4th August 2022 and included proposed funding for the development of the three Community Hubs in the District and investment in the continuation of a West Sussex County Council scheme to support NEETs. Officers made a formal submission of investment this Plan to Government on the 31st of August and expect a decision on this submission in October. The Board will be responsible for monitoring progress with the implementation of the Investment Plan, and this has been included in the Terms of Reference.

Conclusions

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

Financial Implications

47. Funding for the MSP comes from several sources, including the Police and Crime Commissioner of £38,125. This is being used to fund a Community Project Officer (Young People) post employed by the Council, whose work focuses on the delivery of community safety and youth projects.
48. An annual revenue commitment of £50,000 from Mid Sussex District Council and funding from the Home Office Serious Violence Fund to enhance the local provision of positive activities for young people.

Risk Management Implications

49. Partnership working in the support and delivery of the statutory functions of the MSP is functioning well in the District and partnership working is not identified in the Strategic Risks Register in 2022/23.

Equality and Customer Service Implications

50. 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

51. None arising directly from this report. The Council's Sustainable Economy Strategy has links to the work of the Mid Sussex Partnership, such as actions on the development of food partnerships and community hubs.

Background Papers

[Mid Sussex Partnership Terms of Reference 2022/23](#)
[Strategic Intelligence Assessment 2022](#)