

## MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Equality Impact Assessment

**Title of Policy/Service/Contract:**

**Proposed Disposal of Land at Courtmead Road, Cuckfield**

**Division: Corporate Estates and Facilities**

**Lead Officer: Chris Carey, Development Surveyor**

**Date Assessment completed: 25th May 2021**

#### 1. SCOPING

##### **1.1 What are the aims of the policy, service/service change or contract?**

The Council owns a parcel of land located at the end of Courtmead Road. The Council wishes to sell this land to raise capital to meet the Council's strategic objectives but in particular to secure the future of all the Council's assets, especially community facilities, and to support local economic development for the benefit of all Mid Sussex residents.

##### **1.2 Who does the service/policy/contract affect? Who are the main customers (internal or external)?**

The Council has not formally made this space available for use to the local community, or community group and the public have been excluded from the site since December 2013. The Council is aware that some groups have in the past made some informal use of the land. Therefore, disposal of the land may potentially affect anyone who has in the past used this land.

##### **1.3 What equality information is available, including any evidence from engagement and analysis of use of services**

Cuckfield Parish Council has in the past opposed the loss of this land as open space as it contends that it has been used by young people, especially a pre-school nursery and a youth club group. There is a record of MSDC Cabinet members having met with the parish council some years ago to consider the availability and suitability of other land in the parish council's ownership that could be made available for use by the nursery or other users.

The Council has also appropriated this open space for planning purposes in December 2013 and received a number of objections as a result of its advertisement. The Council gave due consideration to the individuals and groups who objected on similar grounds to that of the parish council.

**1.4 What does this information tell us about the equality issues associated with the service and implications for the protected groups?**

Although the land was not intended or designed to be used as open space, past information suggests that it has in practice been used in this way in a limited fashion a number of years ago. There is no record of such use since at least 2013 when the council erected fencing around the site. There would potentially be some impact on anyone who has used the land in the past, especially pre-school children and a youth club group. However, as the land has not been used for such purposes for a considerable period of time, the impact is considered to be negligible as these users have not requested further use of the land.

**1.5 Are contractors or partnerships used to deliver the service? Y/N. No**

If No go to section 2.

If yes, please refer to the guidance notes for completing impact assessments and complete the next three questions.

**Identify the contractors/partnerships used to deliver the service.**

**What is their contribution to equality in service delivery and the promotion of equality?**

**How are equality issues addressed through contractual arrangements and service level agreements?**

## 2. Assessment of Impact; Analysis and Action Planning

Any gaps in information or provision, opportunities to promote equalities and good relations identified above need to be translated into SMART actions and recorded here. These actions need to be delivered and monitored through the service planning process.

Opportunity to promote equality, good relations and/or address barriers to service/differential impact	Current action taken to address these	Further actions required and timescales	Lead Officer	How will impact be measured
The needs of different ethnic groups including white minorities, but also established white communities				
None identified				
The needs of men and women. Including taking account of pregnancy and maternity.				
None identified				
The needs of disabled people				
There is a surfaced roadway leading to the land on Courtmead Road. The land itself is not designed or suitable for use as open space by disabled people.	There is no proposal to improve access to Courtmead Road as the Council proposes to dispose of the land.	None required.	Business Unit Leader	None required.
The needs of people with a religion or belief				
None identified.				


<b>Opportunity to promote equality and/or barriers to service/differential impact</b>	<b>Current action taken to address these</b>	<b>Further actions required and timescales</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>How will impact be measured</b>
The needs of gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and heterosexual people				
None identified				
Issues from marriage and civil partnership				
None identified				
The needs of different age groups, for example older and younger people				
If the land was in use by these groups, pre-school children and the youth club could be disadvantaged by the loss of this land unless alternative space was available	There is already sufficient alternative space in Cuckfield to meet these needs.	There have not been any approaches or discussions in recent years with these groups regarding continued use of the land	Business Unit Leader	Suitable alternative space being made available
The needs of transgender communities				
None identified				
The needs of people who are disadvantaged by socio-economic factors such as low incomes, skill or living in a deprived area				
None identified				
The needs of people who live in a rural area				
If the land had been used since 2013, the proposal may have affected Cuckfield which is a rural parish. It is possible that other individuals have used the land from time to time.	There is already alternative open space for general community use in Cuckfield. There have been discussions in the past with the Parish Council regarding the use of nearby land within their ownership.	None required. There have not been any recent approaches from groups or individuals regarding the need to use the land on Courtmead Road.		Suitable alternative space being made available.

### 3. Mid Sussex District Council Equality Impact Assessment Summary

Key Findings	Future Actions
<p>- Although the land was not intended or designed as open space some residents especially pre-school children and a youth club group have informed the council that they have at some stage in the past, used it for this purpose. There has been no recorded use by any group since 2013 and it is reasonable to presume that this specific need no longer exists or those identified group have secured use of alternative sites.</p> <p>- Any historic loss of the use of the land by these groups needs to be balanced against the council's financial pressures, particularly those experienced following the Covid 19 crisis, and the continuing need invest in its capital assets, including parks and leisure centres which are enjoyed by the whole community.</p> <p>- Representations were submitted to the council following the advertisement in late 2013 to appropriate the land for planning purpose as the land was no longer required for the purpose for which it was held at the time. The Cabinet at its meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2013 considered these representations and agreed to appropriate the land as recommended in the report.</p>	<p>- The proposal is to dispose of the land for residential development use and there will be no further actions for the council to take following the completion of the sale</p>

### 4. Signing off this assessment and action plan

Signature .....Chris Carey.....Date .....1st June 2021.....  
 Person undertaking the assessment

Signature ...  ..... Date .....1 June 2021.....  
 Head of Service

Please send your completed impact assessment to Neal Barton for publication on the website.