

# Business News



## Introduction

### **Welcome to the first issue of the Planning Policy and Economic Development business newsletter.**

In 2018, MSDC formally adopted the refreshed Economic Development Strategy for Mid Sussex. The Economic Development Strategy sets out measures that the Council and its partners will deliver to help businesses thrive and to support local people in taking advantage of the opportunities that future growth will offer. In order to support economic development and inward investment, the Council created a new Economic Development Team;

**Mark – Regeneration and Economy Programme Manager**

**Will – Economic Development Officer**

**Holly – Apprentice Economic Development Officer**

As part of the team's efforts to ensure that our local businesses and partners are kept up to date, we have introduced this new quarterly business newsletter. Each quarter the newsletter will showcase important developments across the district as well as highlighting initiatives that local businesses will want to know about, such as our Microbusiness Grant Scheme, and our upcoming Open4Business event.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter and would welcome your comments and feedback. If you have any feedback, or would like further information about any of the articles, please contact our team at:  
[economicdevelopment@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:economicdevelopment@midsussex.gov.uk)



## Open4Business

Open4Business is one of the Council's key annual events to promote the district as a great place to do business and a great place in which to invest.

For the last two years our theme has been the digital economy, however this year Open4Business has a new theme: Skills and Apprenticeships. The event will feature a number of expert speakers, who will share thoughts on topics including the benefits of running an apprenticeship scheme, myth-busting for apprenticeships, and the potential of apprenticeships to help up-skill your workforce to meet the challenges of the modern and increasingly globalised business environment.

The event will take place on Thursday 14th March at Harland's Road College, Hayward's Heath. The event is open to all businesses in Mid Sussex from start-ups to international corporates, who will have the chance to exhibit at the show and network with other businesses and service providers.

Further information about the event can be found at [www.o4b.org.uk](http://www.o4b.org.uk) or by following us on @midsussexo4b on Twitter and @midsussexdistrictcouncil on Facebook.



## Supporting local businesses

Supporting local businesses to grow and succeed continues to be a key priority for Mid Sussex District Council. Over the last year two key schemes have helped to do that: the Microbusiness Grant Scheme and the Independent Retailers' Scheme

### Microbusiness Grant Scheme

The Microbusiness Grant Scheme supports small businesses with fewer than 10 employees by providing grants to fund growth, along with grants to help with the costs of recruiting an apprentice. Funded through West Sussex County Council's Pool Business Rates Fund, grants are awarded to initiatives that help businesses to reach a wider customer base, enable new business lines to be developed, support the recruitment of more staff, and/ or deliver wider community benefits.

Grants of up to £2,000 were offered on a 50 per cent match funding basis, and so far we have awarded £70,824 to 40 organisations.

Success stories from this scheme include East Grinstead based start-up business Marvolios Nostrums. Following their grant approval in September, their founder Joel shares his story with us:

**“The decision to expand was a massive step for us and the grant was instrumental in helping us achieve it – a huge thank you to MSDC and everyone else involved for their help and support!”**

## Independent Retailers' Scheme

Increasing competition from on-line retailers and changing customer habits have made the high street a particularly challenging environment for small businesses. Through the Independent Retailers' Scheme MSDC are working to support independent businesses in remaining competitive.

Training workshops are delivered on behalf of the Council by Martec International who have a wealth of experience in delivering high quality retail training here in the UK and overseas. A variety of subjects are covered by the training including visual merchandising, retail marketing, sales, customer service, inventory and stock management.

Retailers who attend at least one workshop will become eligible for the second part of the programme: a free coaching and mentoring session delivered on-site at their shop. That session will take the learning from the workshops and show how it can best be put into practice in the retailer's own shop.

The next workshop dates are as follows:

Subject	Date	Location
Sales and Customer Service	Tuesday 26th February	Cuckfield Parish Council, Cuckfield
Inventory and Stock Management	Monday 11th March	Council Chamber, East Grinstead

Feedback from previous workshops include;

"I learnt a lot today. I'm looking forward to future workshops"

- **Ninjasi, Burgess Hill**

"The general information and ideas are very useful"

- **Izzy's Party Shop, Haywards Heath**

In addition to the workshops and coaching sessions, The Council is also providing grants to a small number of retailers to help them improve their shop fronts to maximise their impact on the high street. For this year we will be focussing the £21,000 grant funding available on shops in East Grinstead. Officers are already working with a group of retailers and we will soon to be able to announce those shops that will be benefitting this year.

## Burgess Hill Strategic Growth Programme and Business Space

The Burgess Hill Strategic Growth Programme is the most ambitious programme in the South East. The programme works to improve the town to create a destination where people want to live, work and play.





Projects developed through the programme include the delivery of up to 5,000 new homes in Burgess Hill, with approximately 3,500 homes located on the Northern Arc. The Northern Arc development will provide up to 30% affordable housing for residents as well as delivering all supporting social and transport infrastructure. This development will include the delivery of three neighbourhood hubs, two new primary schools, one new secondary school and a range of community facilities and a new business park.

To improve connectivity to large development sites and existing development in Burgess Hill, the programme will also work to deliver a series of infrastructure improvements, including upgrades to existing infrastructure. Examples include a £23m investment in the A2300, comprising of funding from the Local Growth Fund (LGF), WSCC, MSDC and other developer contributions, into the A2300. This investment will help drive forward a new high-tech corridor of business park developments by widening and upgrading the main access route into Burgess Hill. Other infrastructure improvements include a £10.9m from the LGF and supported once more by WSCC, MSDC and developer contributions to the Place and Connectivity programme in Burgess Hill. This will bring a series of improved sustainable transport measures around Burgess Hill town centre, including improved access arrangements for Burgess Hill and Wivelsfield Stations and improved cycle routes across town.

Improvements to infrastructure will mean better connectivity and links to the M23 and M25, providing businesses with further incentive to invest and relocate to Burgess Hill.

These businesses will be supported by £2.2m Government funding secured by MSDC to provide full-fibre gigabit speed broadband for Burgess Hill.

With the intent of growing businesses in Mid Sussex, we have identified the need for more business space in the district. We will work to deliver up to 25 hectares of new employment space, with an overall target of creating up to

15,000 new jobs within the local area. Currently underway is 'The Hub'. Strategically located for access to the M23 and M25, with only one mile from the A23, 'The Hub' presents business opportunities within a well-connected route within Mid Sussex.

The Hub will provide up to 50,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment space. The first phase of 'the Hub' construction is almost complete, with 14,000m<sup>2</sup> confirmed for a DPD warehouse.



In addition to The Hub, proposals to host a Science and Technology park as supported by the Department for International Trade will see the creation of number of high-tech jobs in Burgess Hill.

Further developments in consideration by our planning team currently also include a planning application for a 5,000m<sup>2</sup> facility for Roche Diagnostics.

For more information on these projects, please visit; <https://www.burgesshill.net>



# Gigabit Voucher Scheme



The Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme is supporting small to medium sized enterprise to upgrade their broadband connectivity. Managed through Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), eligible businesses can request a gigabit capable connection from a list of internet service providers registered with DCMS.

Suppliers can claim up to £2,500 against the cost of the connection either individually or as part of a group project where each connection can receive up to £2500 on the businesses behalf. This scheme is not just for businesses, residents can benefit too. Where homes are clustered around one or more businesses, a discount of up to £500 is available per home to offset the connection costs.



For further information regarding this scheme, please visit the website at;  
<http://www.businesswestsussex.co.uk/369-gigabit-broadband-for-businesses-scheme-.html>

Or contact Michael Dicker at;  
[WestSussexGigabit@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:WestSussexGigabit@westsussex.gov.uk)

## Self-Service for businesses is changing!

Billing is changing for all businesses in Mid Sussex.

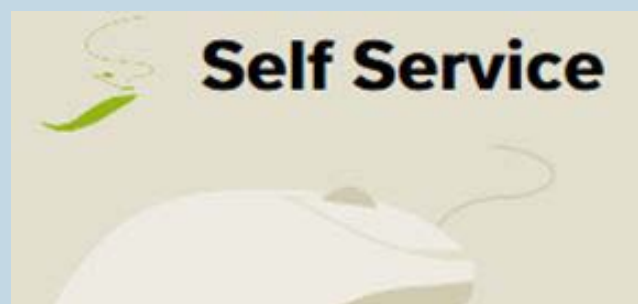
From the end of 2018 account documents will no longer be sent using email attachments. . You will be able to view your information online using the secure self-service website at [www.midsussex.gov.uk/revsandbens/self-service/](http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/revsandbens/self-service/)

By registering to access your account electronically you have more flexible access to your account information, it also helps us to be greener and improve efficiency.

If you are not already registered you just need your reference to active your self-service account. This can be found on any bill or correspondence from the Revenues and Benefits service.

**Anyone registering by the end of February will be entered into a draw to win one of three £50 vouchers for Marks and Spencer.**

For any queries please visit [www.midsussex.gov.uk](http://www.midsussex.gov.uk)



## Looking to join a community of businesses?

Mid Sussex is built on its Business Associations. With our three key towns supported, joining couldn't be easier.

Please visit your respective town's association website to see how you can join now;

Haywards Heath – <https://hhba.co.uk/>

Burgess Hill - <https://www.bhbpa.co.uk/>

East Grinstead - <https://egba.co.uk/>



### Business events

Various events are taking place in the oncoming months supporting businesses. Please click the event of interest for further information;

**6 Feb** – [HHBA Networking Drinks, The Birch Hotel, Hayward's Heath](#)

**11 Feb** - [EGBA Networking Drinks, La Farola, East Grinstead](#)

**20 Feb** - [Food Hygiene Training, Mid Sussex District Council, Haywards Heath](#)

**14 March** – [Open4Business – Skills and Apprenticeships Event](#)