**KHG Meeting Action Decision Log – 3rd October 2018, KCC Sessions House, Maidstone, Kent**

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| **Present**: Sarah Robson, Chair & Folkestone & Hythe DC; Brian Horton, SELEP; Caroline Smith, KCC; Eileen Martin, Optivo; Hayley Brooks, Sevenoaks DC; John Littlemore, Maidstone BC; Marion Money, NLA; Paul Whitfield, Dover DC; Wale Adetoro, Gravesham BC; Stephen Elliot, Riverside; Jo Scullion, GCHA; Bev Covington & Jackie Andrews, Clarion HG; Eddy, MHS; Stephanie Goad, MHS; Simon Cavanagh, Sanctuary Housing Group; Andrew Scott Clark, Kent PH; Debra Exall, KCC; Rebecca Clark, CIH; Gillian Aylett, TMBC; Hannah Wilson, Homes England; Tim Lovell, Canterbury CC; Deborah White, West Kent HA; Sasha Harrison, Southern HG; Jane Lang, TWBC; Amena Martin, Thanet DC; Suzanne Smith, MHS; Rebecca Smith, KHG; Paul Thomas, SELEP Business Board;  **Apologies**: Jo Ellis, Vice Chair & TCHG; John Gleeson, Southern Housing Group; Steve Nunn, Moat; Richard Longman, TGSE; Deborah Upton, East Kent Housing; Gary Clark, Golding Homes; Carol Cairns, Homes England; Chris Moore, Homes England; Sharon Williams, Ashford BC & KHG Treasurer; Clare Maynard, Jo Empson & Mel Anthony, KCC; Vicky Hodson, Kent Homechoice; Ashley Hook, MHS; Maria Jacobs, Moat; Jane Iley, Rapport; Dave Smith, NHF; Chris Moore, Homes England; Adrian Maunders, ERHA; Andrew Bircher, MHS Homes; Peter Dosad, Dartford BC; Gary Stevenson, TWBC;  **Visitors**: Paul Hackett, Optivo; David Godfrey, KCC | | | | |
| **Reference** | **Notes** | **Action/Decision** | **Lead** | **Timescale** | |
| **Minutes and Matters Arising May 2018** | Agreed and accurate. |  |  |  | |
| **Paul Hackett Presentation** | PH presented to the group about the merger of Amicus Homes and Viridian to create a 44,000 homes organisation over the last three years. Drivers for merger included lifting the debt covenant per unit, the opportunity to scale up operational models (patchless working in Kent), growth in capacity to build more homes, remain committed to resident involved – including throughout the process of the merger. AHL has historical high levels of customer satisfaction and resident involvement was an ethos shared down from the top of the structure. Viridian had a previous failed merger; the balance sheets of the two organisations fitted well which provided a good base point.  The first conversation between the two organisations began in May 2015, two-year period between initial conversation and legal completion. Refinancing prior to the legal completion put an additional 8 months on the merger time frame. Between May 2017 and May 2018, the integration phase was completed and the restructure is still an ongoing process.  One big positive = 5,000 homes extra per year that would not have been possible to plan and deliver on without the merger.  Growth drives efficiency, access to more projects, provides more influence and can provide a good place to work. Post-merger the organisation has a strong NPS (Net Promoter Score) @ 66. Lesson Learn – slide 7 of the presentation; include pace of merger, due diligence, consultation of all staff and residents, integration of systems.  Questions/Discussion Session: Optivo as a merged organisation remain true to roots with the provision of affordable homes as a social landlord, 85% affordable and 15% market tenure. Considering different tenure models to respond to the client groups, such as young people, rental and shared ownership. Income levels and vulnerability provide barriers for young people to access affordable housing. Geography is a significant factor to consider when merging, the impact of this merger and those of bigger organisations such as Clarion are not yet fully understood. Focus on delivery areas include Swale, Rother, Hastings, and Croydon with a view to work in new areas and explore new opportunities. Land led development – Optivo have a new team working on this, enables control over sites and what is developed.  Future projects include the development of a Customer Avatar, to be launched in 2020, the first Avatar in the sector. Other projects include the digital transformation rolling out, mobile working, use of app, on line services. Using more accurate data through technology to manage and understand the sectors performance.  The Board of Optivo is made up of 25% residents; residents have helped shape the strategic business plan and set the tone of Board meetings through feedback and with support from mentors within the organisation.  Keen to explore and encourage the role of apprenticeships through supply chains, this was recently spoken about by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and an announcement about the apprenticeship levy. | |  |  | |
| **Kent Public Health** | Housing and Health remains high on the agenda for all colleagues. KHG have now agreed to take forward and work with Kent PH on some key drivers that will inform the KHG Forward Plan. ASC provided an overview of the model for Health, social determinants of health and explained how they can be tackled.  KPH need to work with partners to undertake interventions at scale to improve outcomes for the population, there are good examples of work across the County, but it is not consistent. The STP is the fundamental reorganisation of the Health Service, without legislation, recognition that social interventions are as effective as medical ones.  One You Kent – key priorities have been identified, this is being rolled out at local levels to across Kent and Medway.  Movement now towards a digital based offer for the population, to support change in behaviour and better outcomes, targeting those in areas of high deprivation, which in Kent is East Kent, particularly Thanet.  Slide 4 – provides an overview of the other key priorities for KPH in addition to the afore mentioned.  The 2016 Annual PH Report is about Housing and Health - <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/health-policies/annual-public-health-report>  There needs to be more work considered around design and spacial planning to design in health service, both in terms of access to services but also use of open spaces to encourage physical activity.  Needs to be more innovation about use of existing and new funding to meet priorities across joint working, including the Better Care Funding, and services provided in the community through organisations such as Golding Vision. The workshop session for the KMHS on Health and Wellbeing could explore these opportunities in more depth. | |  |  | |
| **Homes England Update** | **HW provided the following update :**  **Homes England**:  As of 1 October 2018, the Regulator will be a separate, standalone body, and will no longer be part of the Homes and Communities Agency (the overarching legal entity) which is has been part of since 2012. The core role and function of the Regulator will not change and it will continue to work to maintain a well governed and financially viable sector able to contribute to the housing supply agenda.  **Shared Ownership Affordable Homes Programme**:   * + Open for business – no PC dates beyond 31 March 2021 currently   + Grant available for a mix of tenures   + Acquisition 40% / SOS 35% / PC 25%   + Compliance Audit 2018/19, currently being assessed.   + Social Rent addendum released June 2018. Available in areas of high rent affordability pressures (see Annex 1). Firm schemes submitted via CME.   + Strategic Partnerships (reference in June 2018 addendum), bespoke approach where RP can evidence delivery over and above existing commitments.   **Care & Support Specialised Housing** :   * + Budget of £76m per year made available up to 2021.   + AR & AHO Bids welcome for all forms of affordable housing for older people and adults with disabilities or mental health problems.   + As this is a continuation of the existing CaSSH fund the funding requirements will remain unchanged, please see Phase 2 prospectus.   **Housing Revenue Account Borrowing Programme**:   * + £1bn additional HRA borrowing headroom available in areas on high affordability pressure from 2019/20 – 2021/22.   + The additional borrowing is available for LAs in England with a HRA or who are intending to set one up.   + Purpose is to increase the supply of new council and affordable homes delivered by LAs.   + Ability to combine HRA borrowing with either SOAHP 16-21 grant or Right to Buy receipts.   + Bids are currently being assessed.   **Community Housing Fund**:   * + £163m available up to March 2020 to deliver additional homes by the community-led sector.   + Fund available in two phases: Revenue & Capital.   + Bids are welcome until fund is fully committed or until 31 December 2019 (whichever occurs first).   **Move on Fund**:   * + £50m across England (excluding London) up to 31st March 2021   + The fund is intending to support homeless people and victims of domestic abuse with low and medium level needs currently living in hostels and refuges; and those who are currently sleeping rough, who cannot move on because of lack of affordable and suitable accommodation in their areas.   + Homes England will provide capital grants (£44m) to cover the cost of construction, purchase, conversion, leasing, renovation and/or reinstatement of properties to be used exclusively as low-cost rented move-on accommodation and revenue funding £6m) for the on-going support costs necessary to assist to sustain housing.   + Priority given to proposals that will most effectively and quickly free up space with hostels and/or refuges.   + Bidding via IMS   **Garden Communities**:   * + The prospectus invites bids (from either LAs or private sector partners) for ambitious, locally supported, proposals for new garden communities at scale. In return for tailored assistance to help design and deliver the vision for these places.   + Garden Village = 1,500 – 10,000 homes. Garden Town = 10,000+ homes.   + Proposals must demonstrate how the new garden community fits with the housing need including expected future growth and how the new garden community fits with wider strategies to support economic growth and increase productivity.   + Strong LA/CC support   + Government will look to agree a package of support tailored to suit the scale and ambition of proposals. Assistance could include resource funding; delivery advice and support; delivery vehicles; cross-government brokerage’ peer learning and networking opportunities.   + Proposals to be submitted via MHCLG’s DELTA portal by 9 November 2018.   **Home Building Fund**:   * + £3billion available for Development Finance, Infrastructure Finance and Supporting Innovation   + Available to Private Sector businesses that builds new homes or prepares sites for housing.   **Land Assembly Fund and Small Sites Fund**:   * + The £1.9bn housing funds released 17 September 2018 will support the government’s ambition of constructing 300,000 new homes a year by mid 2020s. These funds will also help deliver over the longer term with about 100,000 new homes by 2050.   + The £1.3bn Land Assembly Fund will enable Homes England to acquire, assemble and de-risk private and public sector sites outside of London and make them attractive for rapid private sector development.   + The £630m Small Sites Fund will be used to fund on-site infrastructure and land remediation-unlocking land for up to 44,000 homes by 2020/21.   **Mics**:   * + Green Paper: consultation launched 14 August 2018 and will run until 6 November 2018Use of receipts from Right to Buy sales consultation, opened 14 August 2018 and closes 9 October 2018.   + South East Partner Event in Cambridge 22 October 2018.   Information on all of these is available on the gov.uk website. | |  |  | |
| **Growth Deal for K&M** | DG provided an update to the membership regarding the potential opportunity of an Infrastructure Proposal for Kent and Medway. Following secondment to DCLG DG was tasked to explore opportunities to look at work the housing sector wanted to take forward/consider, and this included dialogue with Homes England and the new MHCLG about deals.  KHG have been working with DG and Tracey Kerly (ABC CEX and Housing Champion for CEX’s) to explore with Government and Kent Leaders the opportunities around growth and infrastructure. The slides shared by DG explain the background the discussions, the feedback from Kent Leaders to date, the next steps. This item was discussed at the most recent meeting of the Kent Leaders and it was agreed to consider moving forward but on an East Kent basis, once more information about this is agreed it and if a formal conversation with MHCLG and Homes England is undertaken, this will be shared back with KHG members. | |  |  | |
| **SE LEP Update** | The Garden Community LEP Board met on Friday 28th September and authority was delegated to the Chair of this board to support bids to the LEP area. BH advised that if garden settlement bids have endorsement from the Local Authority it can be pass ported to the Chair of the Board for consideration.  Areas of focus for the LEP going forward include accelerating housing delivery, supporting SME’s, garden settlements and constructions skills. The new Skills Strategy was launched in Folkestone and Hythe DC last week. <http://www.southeastlep.com/our-strategy/skills/> | |  |  | |
| **KCC Corporate Parent Update** | CS updated that currently there are 1593 children and 1620 care leavers in the care of KCC. From April 2018, there is a new duty for care leavers to be supported up to the age of 25 years. The new local offer will be published in December 2018, there is also a review of the care leavers service to meet the demand and look at capacity and staff resources to meet demand.  KCC are now acting as guarantor for care leavers as a pilot project, working with 25 young people, currently 5 are signed up and accessing this offer. An additional offer to care leavers is priority interview status for all KCC job vacancies and exploring opportunities for apprenticeships and mentoring. CS encouraged all members to consider and come back to the next meeting with ideas or offers about how their organisations can assist care leavers in this capacity.  There is also some work on council tax exemption for care leavers, which will be discussed by the Kent Benefit Officers Group on Friday 5th October. The last slide provides information about Fostering opportunities and CS asked colleagues to spread the word as there is a need for more fostering families in Kent. | |  |  | |
| **KHG Events** | EM thanked all colleagues and organisations for their financial and additional support at the recent KHG Excellence Awards; this was a successful event with 90 people in attendance. There will be included within a survey due to come out from KHG some questions around events, what members want, are there opportunities through joint procurement of training to make efficiency saving?  The workshop list will be shared once finalised, the recent HRA Duty to Refer Workshop summary notes and presentations are on the KHG website for information. | |  |  | |
| **AOB** | **RS encouraged members to complete the survey circulated on behalf of Barbara Cooper about engagement with partners.**  **Meeting dates for 2019 to be circulated in due course.** | ALL Members to note and complete within the deadline  RS to confirm and share | **ALL**  **RS** | **ASAP**  **When avail** | |

***Thanks noted to Kent County Council for hosting.***