**DRAFT - NMSG Action Log – 17th October, Ashford Borough Council, Ashford Kent**

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| **Present**: Matt Eddy, MHS Homes & Chair; Genette Pinwell, WKHA & Vice Chair; Helen Charles, Clarion HG; Felicity Dunmall; Gravesend Churches HA; Anthony Crossley, Ashford BC; Terry Spillard, Optivo; Lisa Smith, Golding Homes; Stefan Polom, TCHG; David Edie, Dartford BC; **Apologies**: Helen Sudbury, Golding Homes; Paul Gilbert, Gravesham BC; Matthew Robbins, Optivo; Tom Harding, Medway Council; Tina Dust, Sanctuary HG; Marc Blowers, Medway Council; June Heslop, Southern Housing Group;**Visitors**: Marie Gerald, Dartford BC & Chair of KHOG |
| **Reference** | **Notes** | **Action/Decision** | **Lead**  | **Timescale** |
| **Minutes & Matters Arising July 2018** | Minutes agreed as accurate. There were no matters arising. |  |  |  |
| **HRA Overview** | HRA from a private members bill and had cross party support, amended legislation in place, in 40 years the housing landscape has changed. The old legislation was crisis point intervention, there is now a focus on prevention with a statutory duty on both the local authority and the homeless applicant/household.Key changes is a change to the number of days homeless from 28 to 56 days. If a section 21 notice is produced this will trigger a homeless duty. There is also a new relief duty, which kicks in after the 56 day period, this is another 56 day period, and working with clients for approximately 4 months before a decision is undertaken. Legislation is now blind to priority need. Also looking at support now, why do they need support, every person gets a ‘personal housing plan’, intentions to tackle homelessness and the causes. If a person doesn’t cooperate there is through the legislation a position to discharge a duty, deliberate and unreasonable refusal to cooperate. Prevention duty – the first duty is blind to local connection. There are new rights to review, there are now 13 rights to review throughout the whole process, each review is approximately £250. Care Leavers a specific new duty related to choice and local connection, a significant change in the legislation.* Stage 1 - Application and assessment and eligibility test –
* Stage 2 - Prevention stage – 56 days, taking reasonable steps to prevent homelessness (Dartford have a multi-agency hub set up to sign post to at this point for inclusion in the personal housing plan)
* Stage 3 - Relief stage – another 56 days, reasonable steps to assist
* Stage 4 - Final main duty - for those in need and not intentionally homeless

£72m allocated by Central Government over three years to assist with implementation of new legislation.TA is the biggest overspend in every local authority, the HRA was in part set to tackle this but unclear yet whether this is successful. The HRA provides a better chance to support and help people threatened with homelessness. Personal housing plan identifies who has responsibility for what steps. Expectations for outcomes should be shared very early on. Discharge of duty, reasonable expectation to find accommodation available for 6 months or more. No requirement to follow up over the 6 months. The personal housing plan, with consent of the applicant, can be shared with the social landlord. Allocation Policies should have been amended to reflect the introduction of the HRA. H-Click the new way to submit data to central Government, the first quarter data has been submitted to MHCLG. MG shared data information about Dartford BC about current caseload. New Statutory Duty on Public Bodies to refer to a local authority, with consent of the person. Unsure of the consequence of not exercising this new duty, which came into place on the 1st October. KCC have undertaken a huge amount of work about the new Duty to Refer. However, there is a new Commitment to Refer, housing associations have to sign up to it, and there is guidance for housing associations on this. <https://www.housing.org.uk/resource-library/browse/commitment-to-refer-guidance-for-housing-associations/> MG encouraged housing association colleagues to work with local authorities and use the guidance.Potential future funding may be based on payment by results.GP suggested about getting consent from new tenants about sharing information with a housing options/homelessness team if a household becomes at risk of homelessness. Consent is then provided by the tenant at a very early stage.MHCLG have advised local authorities to have a specific duty to refer email for referrals. <https://www.gov.uk/homelessness-help-from-council> Use this website for all the information about duty to refer emails. | **Copy of presentation to be shared with minutes.****It was agreed to review the Eviction Protocol to include the HRA legislative changes including Duty to Refer/Commitment to Refer** | **RS****RS** | **When available****ASAP** |
| **DWP Update** | Unable to attend, to be added to next agenda. |  |  |  |
| **Social Housing Green Paper/Social Rents Consultation** | Key points of the Green Paper for Social Housing were read out by ME. DBC have completed a response for their Cabinet. Some issues around the issue of fixed term tenancies, still looking at housing in isolation, hard to create sustainable communities when there are not resources across other public services to support the community’s needs. The paper doesn’t support entry level of key worker level people and affordability of housing to have this mix of people in a community.How to manage the Right to Buy consequences, how to prevent the homes sold from becoming part of the private rental market. Extending of regulation and comparisons across peer housing providers, agreement that regulation does need review but comparison is challenging. The issue around complaints is about managing expectations, what services are landlords providing and what gaps are being filled by housing providers for a community. Heriot Watt University Review paper, looking at fixed term tenancies and outcomes <http://www.welfareconditionality.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/SocialtenantsWelCond.pdf> / House of Commons Report in September <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7173/CBP-7173.pdf> Tenancy Training and using virtual colleague to ensure that pre tenancy training is provided, useful tool to help people Social Rents Paper – annual rent increase by 1%, replacing from 2020.  | **RS to include points in the response from KHG, colleagues to share full organisation response by Friday 26th October** | **RS/****ALL** | **By 26/10** |
| **KHG Update** | Paper provided ahead of the meeting for information. |  |  |  |
| **Kent Tenancy Fraud Forum** | The Kent Tenancy Fraud Forum was set up but has not progressed further forward. There was an initial agreement to take forward a pilot project around Key Amnesty but this did require commitment from member organisations. It was agreed that it would be useful to bring the Kent TFF core group back together and to look at potential for sharing branding and communications costing to then carry out individual key amnesties by organisation but during an agreed period of time with consistent pre and post communications to residents. | **RS to liaise with Chair and set up meeting** | **RS** | **By mid Nov 18** |
| **Joint Training** | RS shared the draft workshop list with colleagues ahead of the meeting, there was a discussion about the workshops identified and others to consider, including: *How to pull together asset teams and housing management – how could this be facilitated through a workshop and bridge the gap between the two areas of the business?* *Housing and Mental Health – identifying and engaging with people with mental health, generic training or advice to attract a wider range of colleagues.**Peer Review – emphasis in the Green Paper about complaints and is this a good area for starting peer/critical friend, managing expectations, how to keep relationships maintained with tenants through the process of complaints, is there an opportunity to consider an independent panel to help as part of the complaints process? (Ashford BC have set up a panel with Members, with just a few examples to date).**Can we pool/share best practice around ASB, with a view to the Green Paper reference to KPI’s for Neighbourhood Management? Key to engage front line staff and other colleagues who would have an interest in the workshop sessions. Potential to use David Armstrong, takes forward cases around Environmental Protection, new approaches and tactics for ASB in Dartford area currently, good practice or learning to share with the wider group?* | **RS to feedback to KHG Events Group for additions to draft programme** | **RS** | **ASAP** |
| **AOB** | Dates for 2019 to be shared by RS, agreed that would meet in March, July and October. Golding Homes offered to host final meeting of 2019, MHS in the Chatham Foyer for July and ABC for March.Safeguarding Co-ordinator role to begin at Optivo next month, a brand new role, TS asked if colleagues would be happy to be contacted or for her to attend a future meeting.AC asked about rewards or tenant incentives, colleagues confirmed that generally their organisation no longer offers incentives.  | **RS to share dates via outlook****TS to provide contact details of group to new role** | **RS****TS** | **ASAP****As required** |

 ***Thanks noted to Ashford BC for hosting***