**1st November 2018 - Maidstone BC Office, Maidstone House, Maidstone**

**Present:**  Marie Gerald, Chair & Dartford BC; Sylvia Roberts, Ashford BC; Elly Toye, Dover DC; Cynthia Allen, KSS CRC; Melanie Anthony & Tony Care, KCC; Lynn Wilders, Gravesham BC; Pam Millington, Dover DC; Paul Stephen, KCC; Robin Cahill, KCC; Andrew McDonald, KCC; Deborah White, West Kent HA; Raymond Easdown, Medway Council; Francesca Roma, Medway Council; Victoria May, Thanet DC; Mike Barrett, Porchlight; Richard Williams, MHCLG; Jane Lang, Tunbridge Wells BC; Mark Powell, Early Help, KCC; Mark Damiral, Folkestone-Hythe DC; Vicky Dodson, Kent HomeChoice;

**Apologies:** Maria Love, Nacro; Becky Waller, DWP; Marion Money, National Landlords Association; Lora McCourt, Canterbury CC

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| **Reference** | **Notes/Outcome** | **Deadline** | **Lead person** | **Action/Decision** |
| **Action log from Meeting**  **March 2018** | Page 1 – Out of London Placements – currently still work in process  Page 2 – Re connection Policy – to be looked at once the Homelessness Commissioning bedded in.  Page 6 - Triage tool all completed  Action Log agreed as accurate. |  |  |  |
| **KSAS Overview & KCC Update** | KSAS is KCC response to the local welfare solution, money previously used for some elements of the Social Fund. There is a report nationally about welfare schemes and Kent is one of a few that has an offer similar to the social fund offer. This is a crisis point offer and is designed to alleviate hardship or further crisis. Cash is not offered as per the previous Social Fund offer, sign posting is a key element of the provision.  Eligibility – as per the information shared in the presentation by MA and TC. Recently commissioned DA services and asked providers to absorb the local offer for these clients. New homelessness commissioned service prime providers are also asked to absorb the local offer for clients. New clients to both services can seek support from KSAS. There are few examples of when KSAS will provide cash, flooding/fire are examples of more extreme emergencies.  There are specialist assessment officers who have access to the DWP back office and can verify and confirm eligibility for assistance. Over 3000 outlets across Kent to assist with helping clients with energy, the bulk of applications are energy or food. Food is delivered in home and can offer a no cook package. There are restrictions on some items, these are listed in the slides within the presentation. Some Academy schools will assist with uniform needs.  People can apply up to 3 times per year, the service does currently reflect the issues with UC and the food offer is now 14 days, it was 7 days before. There is no maximum or upper threshold award, it’s based upon the applicants need. MA made a plea for colleagues to save [www.kent.gov.uk/ksas](http://www.kent.gov.uk/ksas) as favourites and to share with colleagues. Quickest way to apply is on line, there are details on line about what you need to apply for assistance.  There is a clear correlation of applications linked to when professionals are likely to be on leave, as well as seasonal trends. This current year the main challenge is UC roll out, data analysis helps keep the service reflecting needs of factors that may impact applications. |  | **RS**  **ALL** | To share presentation with Action Log along with a leaflet  Colleagues to notify KCC should a particular client reoccur need assistance that isn’t reflected in the options as part of the online application |
| **MHCLG Update** | H Click – to be covered at the end of the KHOG meeting. RW did advise that when you create stats through one Government Department about another the other department has to agree, so the question or request for data via H Click about causes of homelessness is a good attempt to extract data/information about the causes as a result of a new or emerging national policy. Currently local JCP’s are not able to work with local partners and establish local arrangements, this is under discussion to attempt to relax this rule.  Tim Gray London Project – Government are supporting London Boroughs to establish a procurement vehicle and work together to reduce out of borough placements outside of London.   * Budget announcement, not a huge amount for Homelessness but some information about social services funding, house building and removal of borrowing cap on the HRA. The spending review will take place in 2019 and will determine what future funding will be allocated for Homelessness. MHCLG have made a bid for New Burdens Funding but not sure on the outcome of this application. * Small changes to the Code of Guidance, as a result of a Private Members Bill from a Lib Democrat MP about End of Life Care, there will be a letter shared communicating the new changes and local authorities are encouraged to use discretion. * The Tenant Fee’s Bill, this will not have an impact on Local Authorities, there will be an exemption for Local Authorities, as per the discussion at the last LA KHOG meeting. There is a set of training opportunities for Outreach workers, held in London, there is some availability, the details are in the email shared via RW, or email RW direct for more information. * There are lots of funding opportunities/streams now, with a focus on rough sleeping, there is the Rapid Rehousing Fund (14m), Rough Sleeping Initiative (11m), Cold Weather Fund (5m) (short term interventions - announced 31/10/18) PRS Access Fund (20m). The difference between Rapid Rehousing Fund is a specific pathway with four elements linked to it; Rough Sleeper Initiative isn’t restricted in the same way as the RRH, it’s not as tightly ring fenced.   MG feedback on recent attendance at LGA Policy Network meeting and her role through the LGA Review. There is a review being undertaken by MHCLG of the new Act. Rough Sleeping Strategy impact – expected to refresh Homelessness Strategies and call Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy by Winter 2019. There has to be an Action Plan linked to the refresh of the strategy, action plans will be considered more dynamic and meaningful and working with key partners.  MG feedback that locally there have been some issues with the KCC form, not everyone had live DTR emails on launch day and issues about secure KCC emails. There remain issues about how referrals are accepted by local authorities. There is a Housing Association Commitment to Refer, also from the 1st October, via the National Housing Federation. VH has figures about referrals from HA’s, RW can provide fine details about which HA’s are signed up.  It was recently agreed at the NMSG to review the Pre Eviction Protocol to reflect the Duty to Refer and Commitment to Refer.  MG suggested a county wide document to share with all partners/agencies about how to refer for each district. [www.gov.uk/homelessness-help-from-councils](http://www.gov.uk/homelessness-help-from-councils) – a website to check for information, RW advised that this has come from the Duty to Refer, more for signposting. | **21/11**  **ASAP**  **9/11**  **ASAP** | **ALL**  **MG**  **VH/MG**  **RS**  **MG** | Note the deadline for applications to the PRS Fund  To share presentations from recent LGA work  To provide figures & details of those HA’s signed up  To draft changes & share for agreement  Colleagues urged to check local details on website quoted. |
| **Homelessness Commissioning Update** | Appointed two prime providers for Homelessness Commissioning, Porchlight and Look Ahead Care and Support, communication about the new commissioning will be shared in the near future. Children’s have appointed 3 providers Sanctuary Supported Living, Look Ahead have two areas and then YMCA Thames Gateway. There is currently work being undertake to mobilise the services, the prime providers will be soon appointing secondary providers to work with them to deliver commissioned services. There is a transition phase until the new way of working is in place.  Each of the providers have a proposal about how to shape services in their areas, there will be design and development groups to look at how services will be set up, to include D/B representation, with a broad range of elements for inclusion, items covered in the consultation. There is not a blue print about how the services will look, the four year contract will allow services to evolve and develop. The framework will allow colleagues (there are named organisations within the framework) to talk directly to the prime provider regarding commissioned services, which is a more centralised process.  MB advised that Porchlight will need to discuss with local authorities in their area of services about the HRA and the potential implications around clients and assistance via the HRA for housing. There will also be a discussion about the clients who go through the HRA process but remain homeless at the end of the process. MB advised that it’s likely to take between 8 – 12 months to bed in the new service. Prime providers are not restricted to spend the allocated funding so are able to seek out/establish innovation or purchasing to ensure that processes reflect the new service provision. | **As available** | **MA** | MA to share communications via KHOG/RS |
| **Feedback from HRA Workshop** | Actions from the workshop included - to set up a working group to look at the Duty to Refer from Custody and to review the Pre Eviction Protocol – as agreed previously in the meeting.  RW advise that there are two pilots, to help prisoners avoid homelessness upon release. There may be an opportunity for future funding as a result of these pilots. There was a discussion about how the small KHOG working group can manage when referrals are made, not upon release but during sentence or upon entry to either help sustain tenancies or to prevent homelessness. Also how to manage the release of short term prisoners to prevent homelessness. RW advised that MHCLG are also working with MOJ/KSS CRC and assisting prisoners and housing support offer, including when a tenancy needs to be maintained or not. | **End Nov**  **23rd Nov** | **RS/MG**  **ALL** | To set up working group and draft review of Pre Eviction Protocol  Volunteers to email RS if keen to be part of the working group |
| **Protocols** | 16/17 Year Olds who present as Homeless Protocol – MG has discussed this review initially with KCC and the impact of the HRA and Duty to Refer. AM advised that before a referral is made a discussion is undertaken to establish what the best course of action for young person is. JL explained that having a referral at the earliest point would be preferable. MP advised that Early Help Staff are not clear about when the referral should be made.  Intentionally Homelessness Protocol needs review, there is a workshop on 28th November to look at what the protocol should look like. There will need to be representation from Early Help and Specialised Children Services. | **16th Nov**  **16th Nov** | **ALL**  **ALL** | Colleagues to feedback to MG for final discussion at 28th Nov workshop  Colleagues to accept or decline Hold invite from RS for workshop |
| **National Policy, Recent Case Law, Training,** | RW advised that case law about Section 21 and post deregulation and deposit protection, if these are not served at the correct time the S21 will become invalid. A Court has found this not lawful and there is potential for this to have implications, it is likely to be appealed but RW will keep colleagues updated.  MG will share details of Eligibility and Illegal Evictions training to be running in early 2019. | **As available** | **RW**  **MG** | To share any updates to be shared via KHOG  To share details when available |
| **Election of Chair** | MG has stood in as Chair as Jane Smither has now left TMBC. It was agreed that MG would retain role as chair and SC was elected as Vice Chair. | **9/11** | **RS** | **RS to update website details** |
| **AOB** | MG advised that CCC have put in a bid for the Rapid Rehousing Housing bid and if colleagues are keen to work with them to contact Lora McCourt.  MB advised that media groups are interested in London Boroughs incentivising local landlords to accommodate households. Recent experience of this in Medway. RW advised that MHCLG will release data in December 2018.  VH advised that Hannah Gaston from MBC has been at a meeting about out of London Placements and an update is required.  VM advised that media interest in Thanet DC about Homelessness and it’s going on Kent Live on Friday 2nd November. There were questions about TA overspend and out of area placements.  RE advised that a 20% increase in approaches but TA figures remain high, there is a mix across the County about TA figures. RW requested that if figures are going up and there is establishment of reasons why or trends to share back with MHCLG.  SC asked for the next LA only meeting to have a discussion about a S198 protocol. Could this be added to the additional work around protocols and processes of referral with the new Duty? Andy Gale has been to Maidstone BC and has been commissioned to undertake a review, he has 16 resource packs available which can be shared. One of the resource packs is around stats and performance indicators, is there a standardised set of indicators to collect and share?  ET – any discussions about scrapping flexible tenancies now that there is ability to do so? RS to ask NMSG to monitor this and feedback to KHOG | **Dec 18**  **Dec 18**  **2019** | **ALL**  **VH/RS**  **RS/MG**  **RS/MG**  **RS** | **To contact LMc direct**  **VH & RS to liaise about contact for update**  **VM to share the link**  **To note for agenda**  **To note for agenda**  **To note for NMSG meeting** |