**KEG Meeting 20th November, Committee Room 1, Ashford Borough Council, Ashford, Kent**

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| **Present**: Helen Critcher, Chair & Golding Homes; Rebecca Smith, Kent Housing Group; Lewis Kinch, Optivo; Tracey Marshall, Gravesham BC; Alec Mohun-Smith, Orbit; Vikki Perry, Ashford BC; Louise Gray, Dartford BC; Jo Etchart & Jan Henry, Moat; Michelle Thomas, East Kent Housing;  **Apologies**: Diane Talbot, West Kent HA; Lynsey Brogan, Hyde Housing; George Barnes, West Kent Extra;  **Visitors**: Tony Care, KCC | | | | | |
| **20/11** | **Ref** | **Notes** | **Action/Decision** | **Lead Person** | **When** |
| **KSAS Overview** | | 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 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 affect applications. | **RS to share presentation & digital leaflet.**  **Contact details for Tony Care at KCC –** [**tony.care@kent.gov.uk**](mailto:tony.care@kent.gov.uk)  **03000 415261 or 07850907417** | **RS** | **ASAP** |
| **NHF Secondment Feedback** | | HC shared a presentation and overview on a recent secondment with the NHF, based in Liverpool over the last 16 weeks. The project HC worked on was around the ‘poverty premium’ and the concept developed has been about food, there were several other project concepts worked on by other colleagues as part of this NHF work stream. The Good Food Bag concept is not a food bank or crisis intervention, it’s the next level of support provision, this bag aims to feed a family of four for around £15 and there will be an option tested for single person households. Currently there are a number of HA’s investing to ensure that this concept goes to the next level of testing and research, HC to be working on this three days per week in Manchester until March 2019.  HC will return to KEG and provide another update in February 2019, with the potential to look at a Kent project and investment/support from Kent based housing organisations. TM suggested HC considering sharing information or networking with the Credit Union movement, which has a head office in Manchester. | **RS to share presentation**  **HC to share link about details of other projects worked on** | **RS**  **HC** | **ASAP**  **As avail** |
| **Minutes**  **/ Matters Arising** | | No matters arising and minutes agreed as accurate. |  |  |  |
| **Impact of the Green Paper** | | Optivo carried out consultations on the Green Paper and the potential impact, residents helped with the feedback from Optivo to Government. Issues raised were stigma (more younger generation) movement across areas and Right to Buy.  Other colleagues not sure of their individual organisations responses. There was a general discussion about the Green Paper and the potential impact. At the Optivo Staff Conference there was a video shown about social purpose and the role of social housing. | **Agreed to add Social Stigma to the Feb agenda for KEG to consider a Kent approach** | **RS** |  |
| **KEG Agenda Setting 2019** | | Agreed to continue to meet three times per year and a discussion about attendance. Need to ensure that all KHG membership organisations are represented and to understand from members what they want from each meeting.  AMS raised that it would be useful to re visit the employment training, this was picked up by KHG previously but does not have a separate sub group at the current time.  It was agreed that apprentices or trainees could be invited to future meetings to expand their knowledge and experience.  RS advised that as part of events work by KHG there will be consideration of website functions with some investment into branding and marketing and the potential to have a chat based system via the website.  ZJ raised the issue about community housing event, fun days spread across the membership areas, using KEG and KHG as the badge – put this on the agenda for February.  Potential to focus on a Kent based project around reducing stigma – bring ideas to the February meeting.  Kent PH money and to consider future projects – to bring ideas to the Feb meeting. | **RS to share meeting dates, Optivo to host Feb, Moat in June and Golding in October**  **To note for future agendas**  **To note for Feb agenda**  **To note for Feb agenda**  **All to note for February** | **RS**  **RS/HC/**  **LK**  **RS**  **RS**  **RS** | **ASAP** |
| **Discussion Session** | | JH advised that new projects in Stanhope, one is Strengthen Minds, working with 16 – 25 year olds and employability, targeting those who are at risk of making negative life choices. Two new fitness boxing projects, to engage with YP and improvement of self-esteem and can benefit a nationally accredited programme and train the trainer. Also a boxing programme aimed at parents. The trainer is attending the Christmas Fayre in December and promote the training. HC suggested putting leaflets in school book bags.  VP advised that ABC carry out community walks/door knocking with Community Safety Partnership colleagues and Community Wardens, there could be potential to invite RP’s with stock in areas to join these going forward.  MT advised that EKH have struggled with long standing engaged residents, there is just one member of staff and the focus is on the essential and would be keen to share or join in on projects going forward. EKH no longer provide paper copies of the newsletter, keen to hear about what other organisations are doing. HC advised that Golding have reduced production to three times per year with the option to have it digitally. DBC are using a blog with a main story and links to share news with access to a quarterly update if required, this is a new role for LG and learning around IT and Design.  AMS advised that there is a new Employment Coach commenced work in Kent, the event earlier in the year was very successful, there is likely to be another event in early 2019. A number of Community Investment Projects running in Kent, including working with OP and digital inclusion, generally these are OP in existing schemes**.** AMS to invite the Project Manager and Project Placement Manager to the February meeting to talk about the projects.  AMS happy to work with colleagues who have stock in and around Thanet about employment opportunities/projects/job clubs. Contact AMS if interested. AMS to share any information with RS.  TM advised that resources at GBC have reduced, spending a good amount of time working with Communities Team to help improve estates.  HC advised that is working on a project at Golding Homes on the Tenant Voice, 2 days per week. This is about the residents offer following feedback from liaison with residents. HC is also running a pop up business school in Maidstone in April and will share the information so that colleagues can promote the sessions.  Optivo have a specific Online Residents Officer and promoting this side of the business following the merger and restructure. | **Colleagues to share details of where they have stock across the County and stock numbers and use this to plan future joint work/projects – aim to develop a map for sharing across the group.**  **AMS to confirm with RS**  **All to note and contact AMS**  **HC to share details when available** | **ALL**  **AMS**  **ALL**  **HC** | **By Jan 2019**  **By Jan**  **As approp**  **When avail** |
| **AOB** | | No AOB noted |  |  |  |

***Thanks noted to Golding Homes for hosting***