**KEG Meeting Notes 11th February 2021**

**Attending** – Lewis Kinch, Optivo; Helen Critcher, Golding Homes; Rebecca Smith, KHG; Linda Perkins, Golding Homes; Corrine Beech, WKHA; Felicity Dunmall, GCHA; Gemma Foster, Riverside; Parmjot Pannu; Medway Council; Nancy Cashford, Optivo; Tracy Marshall, Gravesham BC; Louise Humphrey, MHS Homes; Louise Gray, Dartford BC; Loren Paine, F&HDC; Amanda Mankelow, Town and Country Housing;

**Apologies** – Steve Martin & Matt Smith, Southern Housing Group; Lynsey Brogan, Hyde Housing; Ian Long, Anthony Crossley & Vikki Perry, Ashford BC; George Aisling Sims, Medway Council; Michelle Thomas, Thanet DC; George Barnes, WKHA;

**Porchlight Aspirations Mental Health Service**

DR manages a community Mental Health service on behalf of Porchlight, more than 50% is in mental wellbeing and community wellbeing. Working with unemployed adults, Thanet, Canterbury, swale, Medway, Ashford, Maidstone and work with North Kent Mind in Dartford Gravesham and Swanely. Don’t need a GP referral to access the services provided. This is 1:2:1 bespoke work through Coaches, over the summer colleagues were seeing clients outside, in a emergency currently people can be seen but now predominately telephone or digital support.

Work for people for between 4 – 5 months, to reduce social isolation/loneliness (trying to see what meets interest); will support with funding to assist with digital inclusion; education and training; help access volunteering placements and helping with barriers to access this and also have a focused approach to employment in some areas, working with specialist partnership services.

Referrals can be made through David Roberts - [DavidRobert@porchlight.org.uk](mailto:DavidRobert@porchlight.org.uk) / 07919396814

**Questions/feedback** – LH asked about capacity for services, DR advised that capacity is ok at the moment, limited self-referrals. Not clinical experts and do not offer medication, still encourage people to be engaged with GPs/secondary mental health services, can assist with referrals to secondary services. Try to be part of the co referrals and co working with those who are need of support with mental wellbeing.

**Round Table Discussion**

Work life balance remains difficult to maintain during the current restrictions. FD advised that have brought in a support service for residents, covering a range of offers of support, launched on the 1st February, to assist with counterbalancing services that are oversubscribed. <https://www.gcha.org.uk/newsletters-new-tenant-support-and-wellbeing-service/> is the link to find out more information. GCHA have undertaken a mail out to all residents to make them aware, a confidential service operating 24/7. Funded by GCHA, with a reasonable costing structure, price per household. Contact FD if interested in more information and will share an update on the progress with use/areas of use.

LP advised that Golding Homes have been conducting surveys including how as a landlord they can support residents within the pandemic, feedback included a phone call or access to someone to communicate with.

LH asked about the Tenants Together initiative and if anyone is working on this yet? CB advised that taking this to their scrutiny panel for discussion initially, LK advised that Optivo going to set up a residents group to monitor this and the housing White Paper impacts. HC advised that setting up a scrutiny panel which residents will be part of, LP keen to hear from colleagues about panels they are working with, to talk through set up and engagement and the purpose of the group. Together with Tenants, lots of engagement underway with more to come, looking at customer satisfaction data in new ways, do want to take on board this initiative but not a separate push, so will combine with the Housing White Paper requirements. CB offered to have a call with LP about panels, will be doing another recruitment drive for the panel over the next couple of months, AM also happy to chat with LP.

**AOB**

RS advised that KHG main representatives have had information about a Crowd Fund Kent Scheme which is being launched by KCC for the Kent area (not Medway) on the 17th March, RS will share the information about the launch when available.

The papers about the Crowd Fund objectives are on the KHG website using the following link - <https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/events/kent-housing-group-full-membership-meeting-virtual/>

#CrowdFundKent is focused on giving local organisations and groups the opportunity to take forward projects and ideas to improve their local area.

We have seen an incredible response from our communities over the last year and we know the importance of those local connections and groups to improving resilience and wellbeing. As we start to emerge from the crisis, we hope this programme will enable recovery to be locally led and provide that much needed support to the innovation driven by local groups and networks, which make our communities. There will be two funding rounds per year, with the first this Spring. There are a number of ways for businesses and organisations to support the programme as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility, or simply to support amazing local projects. This can range from creating a supporting fund, promoting to your networks, or encouraging others to pledge.

The contact at KCC is [Lydia.jackson@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Lydia.jackson@kent.gov.uk)