**Employment Support Protocol Sub Group**

**(Sub Group to the Kent Housing Group)**

**DRAFT Minutes – Wednesday 7th December 2016, Amicus Horizon Limited, 60 Bell Road, Sittingbourne**

**Attending:** William Miller, Amicus Horizon Limited & Chair; Rebecca Smith, Kent Housing Group; Keeley Atkinson, West Kent HA; Ian Long, MHS Homes; Sara Hutchinson, TCHG; Ryan Matthews, Affinity Sutton/Clarion Housing Group; Lacey Beck, Golding Homes; Jade Howlett, Orbit; Helen Charles, Circle/Clarion Housing; Chris Hammond, RBLI

**Apologies:** Heather Brightwell, West Kent HA; Yvonne Pickford, Hyde; Sarah Hampton & Sahil Khan, SHG; Liz Rickaby, RBLE

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| **Item** | **Notes** | **Action** |
| **Introductions & Apologies** | Introduction and Apologies noted  WM provided the group with background to the meeting and run through of the agenda. |  |
| **Collaborative DWP & Health Programme** | WM shared an overview of the Health and Work Programme and also discussed a proposition that has been shared ahead of this meeting, with a commitment for resource from partners.  **DWP Work & Health Programme** – this is welfare to work 2, a programme designed to shift people from welfare to work and economic activity, that those furthest from the job market have a health condition that is a barrier to entering the job market.  This is the commission of the next phase of national DWP funding to help people make the progression from welfare to work. The national programme was launched in September 2016 and the window has closed for large prime contractors to be part of the framework, there is a LOT for London and SE for investment into employment support programmes, estimated £450m in London and SE over three years, delivery expected to commence September 2017. In London and SE there are about 13 interested prime contractors, decisions to be made about these contractors in early January. Some of the interested primes are existing primes and some are new market international firms.  Next is that those who are invited into the framework (estimated to be 3 or 5) are going to be asked to put their delivery model and supply chain relationships by February, then there will be an award around May 2017 with expected delivery from September 2017.  **Housing Sector element** – many customers in social housing are also the same clients as to be targeted by this fund, those on JSA Plus or ESA for example. Many housing providers offer excellent employment support initiatives and other elements of Care and Support which will enable them to be supply chain partners with the prime contractors. DWP is starting to understand this at national level, with GUAC lobbying this point with Government. The prime contractors also understand the innovation within partners such as social housing providers, which is interesting to them with limited funding. This is a performance related programme. There will be some money up front to allow engagement with tough performance monitoring to receive additional stage payments. There are further conversations about business planning and how to pay for recruitment of staff and support for customers.  In London with GLA and Social Fund Money there is a 15 million programme, led by Clarion/Affinity Sutton, Amicus HL are one of the partners of this scheme, to help 20,000 residents over the three year period, with 15 housing associations working within this programme. AHL have five new staff in Croydon through this funding and programme.  There are 10 housing associations who are also liaising in London, none with capacity to organise and lead on the programme, Public Co have been engaged to take this role, and they engineer new role public services. They have met with 13 of the prime contractors over the summer, there are approximately 7 left who are expected to be on the framework going forward, not all primes were right for the programme. There is a meeting today about the commercial model for the programme with the 10 associations and also the pathway for participants (end to end model for the client, how they are supported through their journey to work). Once the winning primes are selected in January they will come back to go through the programme, Public Co are the liaison between the group and the prime contractors.  GUAC has placed an advert for those national housing associations who want to be part of a programme; WM is making an offer to housing association partners in Kent about a potential partnership programme for Kent and Sussex, whether there is an appetite to take this forward. The more associations that join the programme will reduce the associated costs (in the proposal shared by William Miller). Following the deadline there will be another adjusted proposal with adjusted costing to reflect the number of associations working in partnership.  WM advised that there has been a lot of profiling work within AHL about residents, who is claiming what benefits or unable to work due to disability, to understand where the need is and those who could be positively impacted by the programme.  Ann at Public Co would be happy to have a conversation with any colleagues about any queries about this programme. Ann is well placed to answer any queries about the financial model.  KA advised that WKHA logged into the Webinar yesterday about the programme. Questions raised about costing – the current phase and request for upfront cost is for the ‘Development Phase’. This is organising the supply chain proposal proportion by the primes for the end of February 2017, to be included by the primes in their contract submission. The upfront costs are payment to Public Co to assist with this element of work.  For the proposed Kent and Sussex model, it will follow a similar model to the London model and it will be for each association partner to identify how they will resource posts, the areas they will focus work in, and a business plan for delivery. The starting point for the costing is that associations will get sufficient funding to cover delivery of the programme. WM advised that there may be an opportunity to look at how to minimise costs and offer an incentive for the prime contractor against the proposal submitted by the potential supply chain partners, for example working from premises that AHL already use and therefore are not charged to the programme costing. There could be housing association match funding agreed for the programme, these elements may make the proposal competitive.  The costing includes the 10% expenses that is mentioned within the proposal shared from Public Co. | **Colleagues to share appetite for joining the programme (Sussex/Kent) by 5pm on Thursday 15th December**  **WM will share via RS a formal request to KHG members about joining a Kent & Sussex Health & Work Programme – this would be an in principle agreement to join**  **For clarity London work is £75K and the local work is £19k – the bigger the grouping the costing reduces. If you join the programme you will be asked to make a contribution to the overall £75k cost as well as the local costing of £19k** |
| **Joint Work with KCC** | KCC were unable to attend the meeting but colleagues have met with KSE. RBLI are due to meet with KSE in January and to include non-housing association colleagues. KSE colleagues are aware of the work streams that this group and members are engaged with, for example the DWP Work and Health Programme.  KSE have shared a map/list of clients supported through KSE, our challenge was to identify where there clients were and the relevance to HA’s in Kent. RS to reissue the information to colleagues, with a deadline to respond in terms of any overlap with customers. From this there can be local conversations about who is working with what clients and how organisations can partner to create employment opportunities, through supply chain for examples. | **RS to share mapping information & any summary about KSE, colleagues to respond by Monday 16th January 2017** |
| **News on Employment Support Work Activity** | There was a round table discussion:  IL advised that working on big contracts and has good positive outcomes from contracts about social value elements. There is a lot of work with RBLI, including careers advice services.  HC advised that there has been a merger recently at Circle with Clarion, there is a new Social Value Delivery Officer in the new structure and she will be involved in this group going forward. There is a neighbourhood approach being introduced to look at the partnership between housing services and social value work.  SH advised that TCHG are re-evaluating all programmes, still working on Digital Inclusion and a time for reflection within the organisation, with a focus on learning skills and employment for residents, rather than the community overall.  JD advised there is new enterprise launched within Orbit, gradually getting referrals in to the programme.  KA advised that West Kent Communities is now in place, there has been a lot of restructure within WKHA. WKHA are also looking more at procurement and a team looking at social value and what this means for West Kent. There is also a review of the service overall, what is working and how to have a more attractive offer for clients. The main areas covered are Sevenoaks and Swanley. WKHA also run a programme with Kent Libraries which is going well.  WM offered to invite colleagues from AHL who work on Employment Support and Financial Inclusion, working on a triage system. Colleagues are invited to bring along other relevant colleagues who would be interested to hear about good practice. KA to share details of an Entitled To colleague who spoke at a recent GUAC conference, KA to liaise with RM about a potential contact.  LB advised that Golding Homes are recruiting for an Employment Advisor, hopefully this post will be filled in January 2017.  CH advised that for RBLI there is a new contract Work Routes, pre employability, this is voluntary provision working across Kent and more flexible and tailored towards the individual. CH keen to work more with partners and collaborate as less prescriptive as other programmes. CH can share a list of eligibility criteria and referral numbers for the programme with RS to share with colleagues to increase referrals to this new programme. RS to chase up with LR at RBLI about the BBO meeting with housing association colleagues that was planned for early 2017.  RM advised that there has been little work in Kent around employment support services, but this will change from March 2017 with the restructure and merger. There will be a Clarion representative at this group from April 2017.    WM advised that Talent Match SE continues, not all areas are covered in the County. This is year 2.5 of the 5 year programme, if you have young people who can benefit from this coaching/mentoring support please refer to the programme. They can take 10/20% of participants from out of area if young residents/people need support. JH asked to take back to Orbit about more work in Sussex, JD to provide RS and WM with a contact name to share back to Princes Trust. There is also a scheme to train staff to become mentors, this is free training and there is another point of contact for this which RS will share.  The scheme is now more flexible than when first launched, any questions to be referred to the contacts at Princes Trust.  WM also advised that there is a partnership between AHL and two other associations to deliver on a 10m Resident Enterprise programme (AHL, Clarion and Radian) this is a last chance European regional development fund, the submission will go in at the end of January 2017, with the 3 year programme starting in September 2017. There will be scope to engineer more localised partnerships through this programme once established. There are also some French housing providers working in this programme. There should be approximately 2,500 UK residents supported through this programme.  WM advised that Gingerbread won the Single Parent element of the BBO contract, AHL are part of their supply chain and are waiting to hear on next steps. The funding was modest for this programme; delivery will be mainly in Sussex for Gingerbread. | **HC to share new contact details with RS to add to distribution list**  **RS and WM to liaise about date for this meeting**  **RS to chase and confirm with colleagues**  **Colleagues are asked to share any contact details**  **RS to share the contact details to Princes Trust for colleagues with regards to referrals and for mentor training**  **WM to feedback with colleagues on progress** |
| **Finalise Progress Report** | RS advised that the next meeting of Chief Executives is 10th January 2017; any papers have to be with KCC colleagues by 3rd January 2017.  RS to update the report accordingly, with information from those who have provided stats and to include commentary about the group running until June 2017 with a review to the role of this group after this time.  There was a request for case studies and photos to include within the report – see deadline for sharing with RS. | **Wednesday Noon is the deadline for any case studies and photos to share in the Employment Support Progress Report. If there are any videos to share RS can put on the website and share at the JKCE meeting in January** |
| **AOB** | It was agreed that the group should continue to meet up to and including June, to provide a summary report over the last three years, including year-end stats for year end March 2017. This report will be able to include elements to about the work with KCC KSE and the DWP Health and Work Programme. In June 2017 a decision can then be taken about future meetings.  22nd February is the suggested date – IL to liaise with RS about room booking and parking at MHS Homes in Medway.  SH asked whether there is anywhere to obtain the employment support services available across Kent and Medway? RS advised that this group did look at this some time ago but was a large piece of work. WM suggested DWP/Job Centre, KCC, colleagues within HA’s and possibly BBO and Big Lottery as they may have information by the Programme Lead for BBO. | **RS to share dates for future meetings via outlook and the KHG website** |

***Thanks to Amicus Horizon Limited for hosting and providing refreshments***