Kent Housing Group Executive Board

MINUTES – Wednesday 20th January 2016

Swale Borough Council, Swale House, Sittingbourne Kent

**Attending**: Eileen Martin, Amicus Horizon Limited & Chair; Satnam Kaur, TMBC and Vice Chair; Deborah White, WKHA; Peter Stringer, Golding Homes; Kevin Hetherington, TWBC and Kent Homechoice; Christy Holden & Melanie Anthony, KCC; Bob Porter, Thanet DC; John Littlemore, Maidstone BC & JPPB; Jill Pells and Rebecca Smith, KHG

**Apologies**: Tracey Kerly, Ashford BC; Brian Horton, SELEP; Pat Smith, Sevenoaks DC

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| **ITEM** | **NOTES** | **ACTION** |
| **Introductions** | Introductions and apologies noted. |  |
| **Minutes & Matters Arising** | Minutes agreed as accurate.  RS advised that SI that Kent Customer Service Group on Monday, feedback to be shared when received.  RS advised that she has one more company to meet and get a website proposal, and then the small working group on this can consider and make a decision about the appropriate way forward.  CH advised that her procurement colleagues are yet to share details – see page 3 of the minutes.  RS advised that McCarthy and Stone did not respond to several requests to attend and present to the KHG in January.  RS to chase up Bob Heapy and William Campbell Rowe regarding filming for the KEG Good Practice DVD. | **RS to note**  **RS to note** |
| **KHG Budget** | DW was unable to provide an up to date budget. West Kent HA is in the process of finalising the budget ahead of the transfer of the account from West Kent to Ashford. When the accounts are ready for transfer DW will share the up to date balance via RS. | **RS to share details when received** |
| **KMHS Refresh & Housing Planning & Developer Workshop** | There was no additional update regarding the KMHS Refresh. DW raised concerns about the delay and how this may impact on the work undertaken by Kerry Parr, whether this work may become out of date. RS advised that Kerry has updated following government announcements and has potential to update further to ensure its accurate and useful information.  Housing Planning and Developer Workshop – DW raised concerns about the remit of the workshop on the 10th February, that the original scope of the meeting was to talk about how and where those in housing need will be housed. There are also issues and concerns to discuss about properties that are becoming difficult to let in some areas of the County.  There was a discussion about the workshop and whether it would be appropriate to hold fire on the housing planning and developer workshop, until there is further clarity centrally regarding the housing and planning bill. The more pressing issue is with regards to letting and the true impact of welfare reform.  It was proposed and agreed to retain the date for the 10th February and use this time at Ashford for the discussion above, RS to contact Planning and Developer leads to advise that this will be postponed until we are further down the line with regards the Housing and Planning Bill. The objective is to understand what the impacts are for Housing Associations Business Plans, and what this means for the working relationships between local authorities and housing associations. To ask Steven Nunn to pull together and share some key points in conjunction with DW, Peter Stringer advised that the NHF have had a round table on a similar discussion and can share the notes from this to drive the agenda for the session.  To invite the key members of the KHG membership and appropriate substitutes if required, to invite Ross and Kerry as agreed. Marion Money and Melanie Anthony also to be invited for their perspectives as part of the discussion. | **EM to contact Steve Nunn about speaking at the event, PS to provide the NHF notes and DW to work with SN and provide HA developer perspective. SK to provide the LA perspective**  **RS to contact Nick Fenton and Simon Thomas regarding postponing the Housing Planning and Developer Workshop**  **PS to share notes with RS**  **RS to note** |
| **KHG EXB Membership** | Changes are required to the membership of KHG EXB, Tracey Kerly will be taking post of CEX at Ashford and therefore their new Head of Housing will attend as KHG Treasurer, Pat Smith is retiring in May therefore one LA representative required.  It was agreed that a request for nominations will be made to the membership and then it will be agreed at the May meeting of KHG. This will go out as a separate email to the membership. | **RS to send out separate email to the group** |
| **Accommodation Strategy & Commissioning Body Update** | CH had nothing further to add to the update from the earlier meeting.  MA followed up the information provided by CH at the earlier KHG meeting. Review all plans to date and identify their relevance and what should or could be done regarding services for vulnerable people. Housing related support is an important prevention pathway and supporting people cannot be delivered in isolation. This review will be completed by 31st March; this has involved consultation and review of performance information. There is not a huge change in direction expected from this review. There are some changes that can be made in the short term, including overlap or duplication of services, over provision of service or unnecessary provision and the risks associated with no longer funding such services. These changes could take place from April 2016.  OP Services - community alarm element and if providing this going forward, there are other options for those who have an assessed need for such equipment. The notice period for changes is quite short, shorter than would be preferred by KCC. There will be an extension of the contract to allow a period of three months’ notice to lengthen the overall provision of this service. For those who are highest paid provided will have a staggered change to payment to reduce the impact of the reduction in provision. The letter sent out to colleagues is not a consultation but a notification of what is due to happen.  Housing Related Support – questions have been aske about whether it is feasible to cap the hourly rate? Then to consider what happens in the services, again over provision or duplication of services. This will be the same approach for MH and LD clients and for the small number of those with PD or sensory disabilities. For those other adults that fall outside of these client groups, these services are lean and the hourly rate is low, therefore there is no option to make the change without causing a negative impact. The approach is to look at other areas of the service where money can be used collectively to retain the services required. There are some events being held in the near future about joint working and a joint approach to review these potential changes, these will be focused on 2017/18 and beyond. MA to share the date and details for the workshop with JP to share with KHOG.  Providers will be contact next week regarding the proposed changes, there is a communication plan that manages the process of change, and this written correspondence will be followed up with individual discussions. The consultation for the Young Person Homelessness is a separate issue and consultation. MA’s team is now known officially as Community Support.  With regards to Domestic Abuse, there is a broad specification that requires consultation before going to the provider and then it will go out to tender. This consultation will come out via the portal.  PS questioned whether MA and colleagues are considering what will happen should providers walk away from provision across the county and the linkages between these services and the ambitions within the KCC Accommodation Strategy. There are discussions and a move internally within KCC to ensure that decisions around placements and services for all client groups are not the quick and easy option and allow the release of revenue to ensure provision of better services and delivery of accommodation. | **MA to note and JP to share with KHOG** |
| **KHG Events** | The Housing Planning and Developer workshop was discussed earlier in the meeting.  JP to contact Emma Hanson regarding leading a workshop at the KHG Seminar. | **JP to follow up** |
| **Any Other Business** | No Any Other Business noted. |  |

***Thank you to Swale BC for hosting and to Amicus Horizon Limited for providing lunch refreshments***