**Neighbourhood Management Sub Group**

**MINUTES – 26th April 2016, Ashford Borough Council, Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ashford TN23 1PL**

**Attending**: Helen Sudbury, Golding Homes & Chair; Matt Eddy, MHS Homes & Vice Chair; Matthew Robbins & Eileen Martin, Amicus Horizon Limited; Aaron Simpson, Circle Housing Russet; Genette Pinwell, West Kent Housing Association; Pam Millington & Jill Rogers, Moat; June Heslop, Southern Housing Group; Chailean Dottin-John, Gravesham BC; Keith Cane, Town & Country Housing Group; Joanne Downs, Riverside; Rebecca Smith, Kent Housing Group

**Apologies**: Tina Dust, Sanctuary Housing; Louise Taylor, East Kent Housing; Anthony Crossley, Ashford BC; Daren Donoghue, TCHG; Raj Gandecha, Moat; Brian Horton, KHG & South East LEP; Steven Knowles, Dartford BC; Hannah Easton, Amicus Horizon Limited; David Edie, Dartford BC;

**Visitors**: Quentin Carrington- Moss & Mike Kenny, Kent Police; Jay Aylett, KCC; Dominic Norwell & Myra Dicken, Medway Council

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| **ITEM** | **NOTES** | **ACTION** |
| **Introductions & Apologies** | Introductions and apologies noted around the table. |  |
| **Kent Police Presentation** | Quentin and Mike presented to those attended. A DVD was shown which outlined the impact of gathering and sharing intelligence at all levels can impact positively  on the Prevent Agenda. They are not able to share this DVD more widely but are happy to work with housing providers and provide appropriate levels and lengths of training around counter terrorism.  QCM is the Prevent Officer for East Kent, MK works within the West of the County. There are four Prevent Officers and some support staff working in this team for Kent.  There is also WRAP (workshop to recognise and prevent), this was delivered by Kent Police but is now delivered by those who are trained in this training. There are also some companies who are now offering to deliver this training but at a cost. CHANNEL – this is an on line e learning tool that is another tool for colleagues to consider when looking at training opportunities.  QCM and MK both stressed that prevention of terrorism is not just centred upon the ISIS threat, there are also threats with regards to the extreme right wing groups, animal welfare protesting for example. The threats occur when the issues steps up from a peaceful protest or demonstration of feelings to actions more severe.  It was stressed that it is important for officers to have the right mind set to consider all potential situations when visiting homes, to use instinct and to report anything that doesn’t seem to be right or doesn’t sit comfortably. | QCM to share additional information via RS regarding training and information about the Prevent Team |
| **The Impact of UC** | MD and DN introduced themselves the group and their respective roles at Medway Council. They have recently presented on this topic to the Kent Homeless Officers Group (KHG Sub Group).  There was information shared about the top challenges coming forward now with regards to Universal Credit. One of the main challenges and the area of interest was the loss of income when tenants are transferring and there is no dual HB provided (this will only occur in exceptional circumstances) – there is a need to work together as partner organisations and minimise the impact of this.  DN suggested and it was agreed that it would be useful for a group to consider drawing up a protocol about this matter with the outcome to minimise the loss of income and cost of void times for transfers between housing providers. PM advised that Ashford BC have asked her to consider this with regards to the Moat PFI housing estate in Ashford.  It was agreed that DN would convene this group and then feedback the scoping outcomes at the July meeting. Those who volunteered included DN, PM. JH, MR, ME and CDJ. It was also suggested that RS should contact Marie Gerald, Chair of KHOG about being part of this group or party to the outcomes. It was also agreed that there would need to be some evidence to substantiate this piece of work, impact could depend on stock numbers in an area. Medway Council will host the first meeting. | RS to share presentation with the minutes  DN to note and RS to share email contacts for those listed. RS and DN to note for July Agenda |
| **Minutes & Matters Arising** | Minutes agreed as accurate. Matters Arising:  Page 2 – RS to share Hot Desking data collected by Amicus Horizon Limited with minutes.  Page 6 – HS advised that there is a small task and finish group looking at Affordability and Statutory Duties meeting in May, to feedback. | RS to note  RS to note and feedback once meeting occurred |
| **NMSG Forward Plan** | For July meeting Dominic to feedback on the Welfare Reform Progress.  Housing and Planning Bill, a general discussion on this depending on the stage of it. EM suggested asking a solicitor or barrister to talk about the impact of the Housing and Planning Bill and also potentially the outcome of the EU discussions later in the year.  Pam to talk to her colleagues about Tenancy Fit and the model used by Moat.  RS meeting with Crime Stoppers colleagues about a possible presentation from them in July.  EM suggested inviting Vicky Hodson from Kent Homechoice to talk about what are their priorities and workloads going forward or currently.  PM also suggested a discussion about the impacts of budget reductions and restructures on teams and resources and disclose any opportunities for joint working, invest to save opportunities. There is likely to be more sharing of good practice and how some processes are moving towards a more digital approach.  GP questioned whether anyone else is looking at reviewing tenancy agreements and standardising the offers. JR advised that L&Q are considering this currently.  It was agreed that one group member should take the lead on a particular topic and then open for discussion. | DN to note and liaise with RS  PM to note and liaise with RS  RS to contact VH about attending and presenting an update  ALL to note |
| **Members Spotlight** | HS advised that going forward it would be useful for a colleague to be the lead in a member spotlight, to share good practice and whether there are opportunities to roll out to other areas.  It was agreed to draw up a list and then categorise all the suggestions and then members to volunteer to lead a discussion. | RS to liaise with HS and ME on this |
| **KHG Update** | RS advised that recent work streams have been the set up and the delivery of the KHG Seminar, which took place on 20th April, another successful and well attended event. There were 8 workshops run during the day, with only one topic repeated. All presentations on the KHG website.  KHG hosted a Future of Housing Briefing in February of this year, this was a half day briefing with speakers from LA and HA representatives explaining the true impact of recent budget announcements on their business planning going forward. From the briefing a number of task and finish groups have been established to consider particular areas, such as affordability and development capacity to see how KHG can influence these agendas going forward. This work will feed into the KHG Housing Strategy.  KHG are also working on the development of a new website, this will be a joint website with the Joint Policy and Planning Board, a site that will host all the information that members require, more suitable to our needs and more user friendly.  The KHG Excellence Awards are now open for nominations; there are eight categories and nominations accepted in any appropriate format, written or video for example. The closing date for nominations and how to nominate can be found using the following link - <http://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/KHG_Excellence_Awards_2016.aspx>  RS advised that the Kent Engagement Group have recently commissioned a DVD, which is about demonstrating and sharing the value of resident engagement upon services delivered by housing organisations. The film is 8 minutes long, features both residents and senior members of staff from housing organisations. It is expected that this will be ready for sharing in the next 6 weeks and will be uploaded to the KHG website when complete. It was agreed to share the DVD with the group at the July meeting if completed. |  |
| **UC/Welfare Reform Updates** | RS advised that KHG have been invited to attend the next Kent Joint Chief Executives Meeting in June (which is their away day) to update on progress and current issues with regards to Welfare Reform and Universal Credit, following attendance at their March meeting. RS and EM are working with KCC colleagues on this information and will be feeding into the Kent Welfare Reform sub group. The group were advised that there may be a request for information to share with the Joint Kent Chief Executives and all to respond as necessary.  EM advised that there was a DWP rep at the meeting who claimed that of all the UC claimants only 2.4% would need digital support and assistance to claim and that this would not increase going forward. It was agreed to invite the DWP representative to the meeting to go through forthcoming challenges.  HS questioned whether any communications to new lets to under 35 years? The majority have used their own material for potential lettings coming forward. EM advised that the AHL Board have agreed to only let Social Rent to those under 35 years. In Kent AHL have 35 UC cases; these are low numbers and predominately in Swale. It was agreed that we may not all be aware of who is on UC.  HS advised that Golding Homes is going to recommend to their Board that all new lettings will go on to Direct Payments, this is following recent pilots.  JH advised that SHG they have 18 UC claimants and 9 of these are in payment. Under 35 applicants are being assisted and signposted where necessary. Those claimants are across the 6 local authorities that SHG work across.  JR advised that Moat have specialist Officers, they aren’t at capacity so are working on affordability issues also. Medway Council also have two specialists’ officers who work within this area.  KC advised that TCHG have identified 100 people who are likely to be impacted by the Benefit Cap reduction and they are worked with on a one to one basis to try and increase engagement. This identification work was done in partnership with Tunbridge Wells BC and Maidstone BC and also the DWP.  AS advised that Circle has shared housing facilities or schemes for under 25 years and has concerns about the future of these. There are discussions or concerns about the longevity of these schemes, EM advised that there will be exceptions to the reforms. | ALL to note  RS to contact and invite to future meeting |
| **KCC Safeguarding Presentation** | Jay Aylett introduced herself and explained her role to the group. JA is the OPPD (Older Persons and Physical Disability) Safeguarding Manager at KCC. There are two directorates OPPD and then LD/H (Learning Disability and Mental Health).  JA going through the presentation updated the group as follows (summary notes)   * ‘No Secrets’ document is now obsolete, since the Care Act introduced * There is a Safeguarding Adults Board, which is now has a legal requirement and a Duty to Cooperate * It is important to make sure that the individual is at the centre of any safeguarding intervention or action * Independent advocates are used when a person does not have mental capacity * Adults have to be able to make decisions for themselves, restoring the control over the outcomes that effect them and any decision making processes * Self neglect is a safeguarding issue, however only when they are at risk due to their behaviour or conduct * The Care Act does not provide new duties to the local authorities but not all are new powers. Therefore you have to consider existing legislative powers to act accordingly * There is a flow chart in the slides which demonstrates the process once a referral is made * The Safeguarding Adult Board is the governing board for all adult safeguarding practices   Questions/Comments:  If there are concerns about other residents within a dwelling when making a referral for an adult (concerns about a child for example) then two referrals should be made via the duty referral team to ensure that all issues are considered.  When a referral is made a Guidance Officer is appointed to it and should correspond with the person or organisation who made the referral to update on progress. Those who have made a referral may well be invited to be part of strategic planning for an individual, if decided that this is a course of action required.  JA advised that there are guidance timescales for when referrals should be acted upon but not specific targets. If a referral is deemed immediate then it is dealt with on the day of referral, for those that are deemed immediate then its within 48 hours, during the referral and initial enquiry with the duty team they can consider and advise about the level of the referral for progress.  With regards to staff who are working with adults and at risk of being subject to an allegation which results in the safeguarding process being actioned colleagues were advised that organisations should have processes in place to support those accused until a finding is established.  JA advised that any concerns or uncertainties about whether a referral should be made can have an initial conversation with a Duty Team member. | RS to share JA presentation with minutes |
| **AOB** | DN – thanked the group for allowing them to present at the meeting today.  JR advised that this group had previously talked about whether there was still agreement around monetary contributions towards adaptations, as per the KHG DFG Protocol. EM advised that there is a piece of work being undertaken to review this process, this was also part of the discussion at the recent Joint Chief Executives meeting in March. RS to share the paper that went to Joint Chief Executives meeting, RS to raise this issue of the protocol and financial contributing to Satnam Kaur, who is leading on this piece of work. One big element of the work is to improve the process for the customer and how it is administered behind the scene.  PM mentioned Devolution and whether it would be useful to have a speaker attend and talk about the issues around this. RS to liaise with Tim Woolmer and Debra Exall at KCC who are part of this process.  EM advised that the Dementia Action Alliance are looking to work with housing colleagues, if you are willing to volunteer to let RS know. | RS to note and share DFG paper with the minutes  RS to note and liaise with HS and ME for agenda |

Thank you to Ashford BC for hosting and providing refreshments