Kent Housing Group

DRAFT MINUTES – Wednesday 14th September 2016

Committee Room 2, Ashford BC, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford Kent TN23 1PL

**Attending**: Eileen Martin, Chair & Amicus Horizon Limited; Satnam Kaur, Vice Chair& TMBC; Rebecca Smith, KHG; Brian Horton, SELEP; Kevin Hetherington, Kent Homechoice; Vicky Hodson, Kent Homechoice; Victoria Moffett, NHF; Jacqueline Wilkinson, Circle Housing Russet; Stephen Elliot, Riverside; Wale Adetoro & Dipna Pattni, Gravesham BC; Kerry Newbury, Amicus Horizon Limited; Sharon Williams, Ashford BC; Deborah White, West Kent HA; Tim Woolmer, KCC; Christy Holden, KCC; Ashley Stacey, Thanet DC; Andrew Bircher, MHS Homes; Marion Money, NLA; Linda Hibbs, TMBC & PSHG Chair; John Littlemore, JPPB Chair & Maidstone BC; Matthew Gough, Medway Council; Helen Sudbury, Golding Homes & NMSG Chair; June Heslop, Southern Housing Group; Marie Gerald, Dartford BC & KHOG Chair; Lesley Clay, JPPB; Larissa Reed, Canterbury CC; Sarah Robson, Shepway DC; Jo Ellis, TCHG; Rebecca Smith, KHG

**Apologies**: Jill Pells, KHG; Adrian Maunders, ERHA; Rebecca Walker & Amber Christou, Swale Borough Council; Andrew Scott-Clark, KCC Public Health; Catherine Charles, Orbit; Olushola Alao, Hyde Housing; Jane Iley, Abbeyfield Housing; Bob Heapy, TCHG; Richard Longman, Thames Gateway Kent; Peter Dosad & Jacqueline Pye, Dartford BC; Jennifer Shaw, Ashford BC & HSEG Co Chair; Liz Crockford, Sevenoaks DC & HSEG Co Chair; Deborah Upton, East Kent Housing; Bob Porter, Thanet DC; Nick Fenton, KDG

**Visitors**: Christine Grosskopf, KCC; Tom Bourne, KCC; Clint Taylor, KCC

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| **ITEM** | **NOTES** | **ACTION** |
| **Introductions & Apologies** | Introductions and apologies noted around the table. |  |
| **Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme Update** | Chris Grosskopf attended the meeting to provide an update about the SVPRS, the presentation slides cover the detail, here is an overview:  CG advised that the Home Office has recently written to local authority Chief Executives about schemes other than the SVPRS. Most of these other schemes include unaccompanied minors, Kent already has over the threshold of unaccompanied minors so will not take any additional numbers.  Vulnerable Children Resettlement Scheme – this is similar to the SVPRS but there has to be a child in the family who is vulnerable, the SVPRS is about an adult in the family who is vulnerable.  Funding for the SVPRS is distributed by default to the Districts and Boroughs, aside from Ashford all Districts and Boroughs have passed the funding to KCC. Ashford BC is providing in house support to the families hence the retention of the funding in house.  In some cases the funding from the Home Office is used to top up housing costs, this isn’t desired but the payments are made direct to the landlord. This cannot be a long term arrangement as funding allocations may be less going forward.  LR advised that one family had refused a property offered by Canterbury City Council; the family had links to another family and were aware of what others had been offered in terms of accommodation in the City. It was agreed that feedback to Roy and colleagues should be about managing expectations of those being housed, getting the ready for the property they are going to be offered. CG did explain that this is an exception but noted the points about the refusal. MG commented that multiple offers to families coming through the resettlement scheme may send the wrong message out to others in the community.  In Phase two of the scheme 3000 additional people to be assisted, by 2020, this is 800 per year. The timings in terms of allocation are short notice, the intention is to use chartered flights going forward, but there is limited time to understand and consider the implications on education and health services when new families are due to be referred. CG did confirm that additional families can be referred and accepted between the chartered flights.  CG did confirm that KSAS funding is not being used to assist families, its about the service and infrastructure of the service, WK Extra are part of this support service.  There are some Governance issues that are now set out in the MOU, this is about a variety of issues, including ownership of data. Kent Chief Executives regards KHG as the ideal group/partnership to help steer and shape the schemes participated in for Kent.  Questions/Comments:  There was a discussion about how the families have integrated into the communities into which they have bee housed and who has been providing support, for example in Ashford local churches have been very good at supporting families and providing opportunities for them to meet up with family or to meet other families in the same situation as them. It was agreed it would be useful to capture the positive experiences along side lessons learnt to help share with all those who are assisting in this scheme.  CG updated that there has only been one issue to date with a private sector landlord and the Right to Rent, the agent acting on behalf of the landlord would not release keys until they had met the family an seen all the documentation to confirm residency in the UK, this meant asking the Home Office to contact the agent to confirm the situation. MM endorsed this action by the agent and advised that they are following the correct procedure, and that the Home Office should be sharing information required as soon as possible before a family arrives. It was agreed that the NLA need to share the messages about the scheme across their membership to widen the understanding of the scheme.  MG is going to share details with CG about landlords in Kent housing families via the Adult Asylum Dispersal Scheme, which is different to the SYPRS and the position fro Kent is that it will not accept people via this scheme until the issue of unaccompanied minors in Kent is considered and resolved as the numbers are so high.  CG did confirm that as Kent has demonstrated good practice and is working well with the SVPRS that should not be or is not likely to be any pressure on Kent to accept additional numbers of families into Kent. Due to the daily political changes within Government the situation with all these areas need to be monitored. | ***RS to share presentation on the KHG website with the minutes*** |
| **Integration of Housing Health & Social Care** | Tom Bourne and Clint Taylor attended the meeting to provide an overview of the Kent Integrated Data Set (KIDS). The presentation slides provide the detail, the following is a summary:   * Huge person level data set linking all data sets across the County with an established link between housing health and social care. * TB shared examples of questions asked currently; some shared are examples from Thanet DC. * KIDS – the key to this is the NHS number and linking the contact points anywhere in the Health Care system. Personal data is anonymised so you can never trace or identify a person. * A flow of data was shared with colleagues, including details of where data sets can come from and go into the Data Warehouse (this is hosted by Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust). * KIDS started in April 2014; the data set does include Medway data and is updated monthly. The scope is included in the presentation slides. * Slides confirm the data fields that are held within KIDS and also the parties to the KID. Typical users are Commissioners (CCG’s). * There are International and National legal compliances for KIDS – including Data Protection Act and the Health and Social Care Act, along with other enabling legislation for Public Health. (More details in slides). * TB confirmed that you cannot use the data set for targeted campaigns or surveys; this is more a planning tool in respect of using the data collected. * There are approximately 200 HISbi agreements signed to ensure that all data collected remains secure. All data less than 5 people is aggregated and suppressed so you cannot identify any individual once data is published and shared. * Utility of the KID – a slide demonstrates how data is shared and used. * The proposal for housing data slide identifies how using a UPRN (Unique Property Reference Number) or Post Code can ensure linkage of data sets across housing and health. TB confirmed that the UPRN is not unique within a property system used by an organisation, it’s a national number owned by ONS so there would be no duplication of UPRN across Kent. * Actions for Data Controllers for those agreeing to use KIDS – two slides identify what responsibility there is for a Data Controller, including compliance with the DP Act and Governance.   It was agreed that some data may be able to share from housing, using UPRN via the details from the Local Level Property Gazetteer (LLPG), this will have postcode and UPRN information. Kent Homechoice also has a huge amount of data that could be shared. Before going ahead there will need to be internal discussions about Governance and Compliance for all members, the slides shared by TB and CT are helpful in this matter. TB advised that Public Health are funding work for KIDS to establish the impact of interventions.  To take this forward it was agreed that LH would lead on this for KHG, liaising with the KHOG Chair and NMSG Chair, Vicky Hodson and other relevant colleagues, PSHG colleagues have expressed an interest in using KIDS. It was also agreed to establish if HIA colleagues should be invited as they may hold relevant data. LH to set up initial meeting and to feedback. RS to be invited to meeting. | ***RS to share the presentation on the KHG website with the minutes***  ***LH to note and take forward*** |
| **Minutes & Matters Arising** | The minutes were agreed as accurate. The following matters arising were noted:  Page 8 - There was no update from MA but to be picked up at the EXB meeting later in the day.  Page 10 – RS to pick up on the first item of AOB and feedback.  SW advised that there has been work about setting up a Briefing about Asset Management, this continues and SW will feedback when arranged. EM advised it would be good to have an event that showcases a variety of models about asset management.  Dementia Action Alliance Awards on 20th October, KHG are sponsoring an award. |  |
| **KHG Sub Group & Partnership Updates** | **JPPB Update**:  LC updated that the July meeting was mainly concerned with hospital discharge and we had representation from several discharge teams. It was a very successful meeting and an excellent networking opportunity between the hospitals and housing and progress is being made. We will be doing further work on this in our Away Day.  JPPB is commissioning some LGBT training for housing options officers in order to help professionals working within the housing sector to be better equipped and more confident when supporting LGBT young people who face housing needs and to ensure that at an organisational level there is a positive change to the knowledge and values demonstrated by all staff. And it will be FREE!  JPPB is sponsoring the Dementia Action Alliance Awards Day in conjunction with KHG. This will be held on 24th October at the Oasis Academy, Isle of Sheppey. See the website events page for details. It’s open to all, but the awards ceremony is by invite only. Eileen and John will be going to represent both organisations and to hand out an award each.  LC met with Kate Parkin who has led Covenant activity in Sussex for some time including Sussex Armed Forces Network and Sussex Pathways. She has recently been appointed on behalf of all Kent CCGs as covenant health lead for Kent in addition to her work in Sussex and will become the single point of contact for all military/health issues as well as replicating Sussex Pathways in Kent and redesigning and relaunching Kent & Medway Armed Forces Network. Kate will be a useful link for our Service Personnel group and issues around SP. There is free training on offer to become an Armed Forces Champion within the network and details can be found on the news part of our website. We have also devised a housing pathway document for SP in Kent and will be finalising shortly.  **Kent Housing Options Group Update:**  MG advised that accommodation for younger people and the Dartford Model being replicated across Kent is key for KHOG as it isn’t understood where we are on this yet, KCC attending KHOG in October to discuss further. There is some mis-understanding between KCC and Districts about the Crash Pad model. JL advised that he and Amber Christou met with colleagues at KCC but there is an update from Mark Lobban at KHG EXB so this could feedback on the situation. There has been some confusion between agencies about the assessment of young people and internal issues to resolve within KCC. In Dartford the assessment sits with Early Help.  Another big issue for KHOG is the Homeless Reduction Bill, the Welsh Prevention model is working in Wales and is welcomed but with more work. The Homeless Reduction Bill suggests that homeless people should be housed for 56 days regardless of being in priority need. This will have massive financial implications alongside the ability to secure accommodation, the LGA are lobbying on the behalf of local authorities about this issue.  In Dartford, in preparation for this change there is a review of policy. MG also reminded Heads of Service that representation at KHOG is important and not consistent and also issues arising again about placements outside of area. JL advised that changes to how housing options teams are set up may have had an impact on decisions about placements, for example clients going through triage contact centres. It was agreed that there needs to be conversations between Housing Option Teams and communication about the placements and pressures of homelessness.  EM suggested review or reminder at a future meeting about the need for communication is needed.  **Kent Private Sector Housing Group:**  LH advised that discussions continue about the Health agenda and housing not being an active element of the Falls Prevention Pathways, LH and SR to meet with the lead for this in early October to resolve issues to ensure joint approaches.  Work is also going on around hospital discharge schemes and the increase in funding from the Better Care Fund, including some organisations reviewing their Housing Assistance Policies.  The Fuel Poverty Strategy is now finalised and there will be a meeting about taking the action plan forward on this in the Autumn.  The PSHG action plan is reviewed at each meeting and a big area is the new legislation about F & G energy rated properties not being let; the group are going to review the EPC data county wide and set some targets to work with landlords on this issue. JL commented that in Maidstone they have tried to work with landlords on this but they have gone and let to London authorities.  There have been presentations on the Housing and Planning Act and also from Tom Bourne about the KIDS work. LH to lead on the follow up on the KCC KIDS.  **Neighbourhood Management Sub Group:**  NMSG colleagues have had a presentation from Kent Police about Counter Terrorism, KCC Jay Allet spoke about Safeguarding and also a legal presentation about the impacts of Brexit for housing. Two T&F Groups are set up to look at loss of income through lack of duel HB for transfer of tenants between RP providers and properties. The second group are looking at principles of Affordability. The sub group are also looking at the impact of the housing those under 35 years and organisations managing a waiting list for these client groups.  **Kent Homechoice:**  VH advised two main projects for KHC are the on line pre assessment and Data Protection changes, the latter are all mostly in place now. The on line pre assessment has hit a stumbling block due to the costing, VH is hoping to have found a positive way forward on this and will share once discussed in more detail with the Chair.  The contract for KHC is due for re tendering over the next two years, the referrals module across Kent will happen in the next four weeks, looking at automating bidding and improving the KHC website.  **Kent Engagement Group:**  RS advised that at the last meeting of KEG there was a presentation from Kent Crime Stoppers about the Ambassador Scheme. The group are considering how to deliver a value for money effective Tenant Training Programme, using in house resources where possible. There are also discussions about a Tenants Conference in 2017 but this has to be relevant and topical. The group will also review the Terms of Reference and establish how RI and Community Engagement colleagues can come together at these meetings, rather than meeting in silo. |  |
| **NHF Update** | VM updated the following:  Voluntary RTB - there is a delay due to the change in Government; indications are that there is still a commitment to the VRTB by Government. There is no news about funding or eligibility or when it will go live.  LHA Cap to the Social Housing Sector – the NHF have been consulting with their members on what a sustainable model for supported and sheltered housing would look like. Members advised that the LHA caps would impact negatively on this accommodation. A proposal has been put forward to Government, with a delayed response again due to the change in Prime Minister. The NHF have launched their Starts at Home campaign, to raise the value of supported and sheltered accommodation, with case studies from housing associations. The campaign day of action was on the 1st September, with NHF encourage colleagues to write to MP’s or invite them to visit schemes to understand the importance of them. The Starts at Homes hashtag was the most used by MP’s on that day. A scheme visit, via KHG, has been arranged for late September by Damien Green MP. The NHF have met with Lord Freud in the last week, with an announcement due on the direction of travel about supported housing is due this week. |  |
| **KMHS Update** | BH covered three items: KMHS Refresh, the SELEP Activity and feedback from the a recent conference speech by the new Housing Minister Gavin Barwell.  BH commented that Gavin Barwell’s language was open, he used the phrase ‘silver bullet’ in reference to addressing the housing issues that there are currently. He talked about not focusing on one tenure, to build more homes of all types; he did say it wasn’t all about homeownership. There was positive commentary about the role of PRS and how this is a good choice from some who require housing, a step to or before homeownership. He also spoke about Homelessness and TA, the concern about the level of households in TA, no real substance to this. He also spoke about supporting the market to bring homes forward, removing barriers, planning role and land release.  The Housing Minister was asked specifically about Starter Homes, the 200,000 homes is still the ambition for the current Government but potentially with an interest in all housing options. His commentary also suggested there may be a broadening of the criteria for Starter Homes.  SELEP – a paper has gone to the LEP Board with recommendations to roll out Housing Business Ready programmes with HiFi, with one in Kent, all four are Coastal areas. The LEP is going to recommend a refresh of the South East Strategic Economic Plan, with recent conversations with the JRF. There is definitely a link between the SEP and the refresh of the KMHS. There will also be a review and refresh of the housing sub group of the LEP, ensuring its fit for purpose, but with a strong commitment that housing is key to the LEP.  They also agreed to fund work with HiFi and others about utilities, further to a report developed around how to develop new homes further, with a potential pilot in Kent. Kent Developers Group is working with KCC on this utilities work for Kent.  KMHS – a meeting was held last Wednesday about the refresh and how to set out how to tackle the refresh, with endorsement from the Kent Joint Chief Executives. Considered themes for the strategy are Accelerating Housing Delivery, Affordability, Supported Housing, Health and Social Care links, Housing Need and Homelessness, Partnerships with the PRS and the links to the wider Kent and Medway Strategic Aims. |  |
| **Feedback from the Joint Kent Chief Executive Meeting** | EM and SK recently presented at the Joint Kent Chief Executive Away Day, to present on the key issues for Kent and Medway in relation to Housing. The session was well received, and they were on board with the broad themes and issues for the inclusion in the strategy. Concerns for them about the delivery of housing, the lack of affordable rented accommodation that may come forward with a push for homeownership, the future of supported housing. There was also concerns raised about specific TA for client groups that are hard to place, for example an ex offender, someone with mental health issues. An outcome from this for KHG was about considering commissioning such TA accommodation, KHG will pick this up through the refresh.  SK feedback about the Integrated Housing Health and Social Care Project, a project endorsed by the Joint Kent Chief Executives for work amongst the agencies across the County. Each local authority and the County Council to support this project financially. RS has been appointed as the Project Manager for the Project. The first meeting of the Board has taken place, there has been a big increase of DFG Funding but the Social Care Capital Grant has been abolished. The scope of the project has been broadened to include how to maintain independent living via a DFG or other aids and adaptions, a holistic approach for that person or household. The next meeting of the Project Board is to be in November and there will be an operational group that sits beneath the Project Board to support the work, and ultimately delivery better outcomes from the customer and efficiency savings. The project is about recommendations, but is an opportunity to deliver services better, skilling up staff and really considering all potential outcomes. LC commented that this links well to the hospital discharge work across Kent.  SK confirmed that providers will be invited to be part of the Operational Group as this will be a broad representation. The first meeting of this group is due to be in October. There are two CEX who are leads on this project.  TW feedback that JCEX’s raised the point about placements and purchasing of homes from out of area organisations, they want to have this as an agenda item at their next meeting. Their concerns are about the higher numbers coming into Kent and the pressures this places on the services in the County. This is in response to the Canterbury and Maidstone homes recently purchased for out of area households. Is there proactive action to undertake to prevent this wholesale purchasing of property in Kent?  MG advised that in Dartford there has been an issue with the Home Office placing in the District without notification, as well as the issue of London Authorities placing. This issue needs addressing.  MM commented that in Bexley have been working with Gravesham about purchasing properties in the area but this will also come with investment into the area through the purchase price. JL is meeting with the Housing Minister tomorrow and will be talking about homelessness and consideration of purchasers having to contribute financially, like a s106 agreement, to reinvest back into an area. | ***EM, SK and RS to note***  ***JL to feedback any issues from his meeting with the Minister*** |
| **Election of KHG Vice Chair** | EM advised that she is due to stand down in January as the KHG Chair and will also step down from the KHG EXB, SK will then become Chair of KHG. There is a need to have a new HA representative on the KHG EXB, and from these nominations there will be a representative elected. Then from the HA reps on the EXB there will be a nomination and election for the Vice Chair role.  The Vice Chair will be in place for 2 years and then will be Chair for 2 years. RS will send out more details about how to nominate yourself or a colleague between now and December. | ***RS to send out details of how to nominate*** |
| **KHG Events** | KHG Excellence Awards – excellent event again this year. We are going to start the process earlier this year in terms of encouraging more nominations to come forward. The KHG Seminar will take place on the 19th July and the Awards will then take place in September 2017.  Build to Rent on Monday 19th September, there are still places on this and it is from 10.15am.  Interreg Study Visit – EM was approached by HA’s in France for a visit to Kent, they come for a weekend. On the Friday of their visit they wish to visit areas in Kent and learn/share good practice, including a tour. EM has confirmed KHG may be interested, that KHG cannot fund the tour facilities or a translator so there is confirmation from them about their requirements on the day. MHS and Ashford BC have both offered support for this visit, once EM has more details she can share. This visit will need support from members, if you are interested please contact RS asap. JW suggested a visit to Ebbs Fleet as an option for an element of the tour. | ***Contact RS if you wish to attend***  ***Contact RS if you wish participate in the visit with French colleagues*** |
| **AOB** | MM advised that NLA are in the Select Committee today giving representation on the Homelessness Bill, and will feedback on this accordingly. NLA are in support of the proposed new legislation.  DP advised that she has copies of The Kent Fuel Poverty to share if colleagues wish to have it. RS will put a link on the KHG website for colleagues to view and download. There is a radio interview lined up about the strategy to promote this, DP can share more details about when this goes live.  BH that the Planning Protocol (KHG/KDG and KPOG) has been signed off by all political leaders in the County and is soon to be published. There will be single item meeting arranged to share how organisations can take value from it.  EM thanks JW for her contribution to the group on behalf of Circle Housing Group.  LC shared a message from Jill Pells, who passed on her thanks to colleagues for her get well gifts.  MG raised the task and finish group discussing Affordability, this is about the issue of Affordability and Statutory Duty, the use of affordability calculators and how these are used to ascertain who can afford to let accommodation across the County. The group have agreed that it would be useful to have a workshop session to discuss all the related issues, with potential to agree terminology about affordability, how people can self-serve in terms of understanding what they can or can’t afford and to prevent any clash between local authorities and providers to navigate through the issues. HS advised that this isn’t just about affordability of rent it’s about the bigger picture, preparing the applicant to sustain a tenancy. SW questioned whether this links back to Kent Savers? JH commented that there are different discussions about debt and it’s about assessing applicants and their ability to afford to live in a property, understanding the landscape from all angles. DW confirmed that this work has emerged from the Future Housing Briefing in February 2016. A date will be shared in due course. The minutes from the task and finish group meeting held on Monday will be on the KHG website in due course for all members to view the full discussion.  JL asked KHOG to pick up the issue of Management Fees for TA at their next meeting. | ***ALL to note***  ***RS to action and share when available***  ***RS to share the minutes and details of the workshop when available***  ***MG to note*** |

***Thanks noted to Ashford Borough Council for hosting and provision of refreshments***